MYSTICS AND COMMISSARS

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S. ENDERS WIMBUSH

Mystics and Commissars

Sufism in the Soviet Union

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In memory of our friend and colleague

Joseph F. Fletcher, Jr.

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Les Codouls and Ruères, 1985

A.A.B.
S.E.W.

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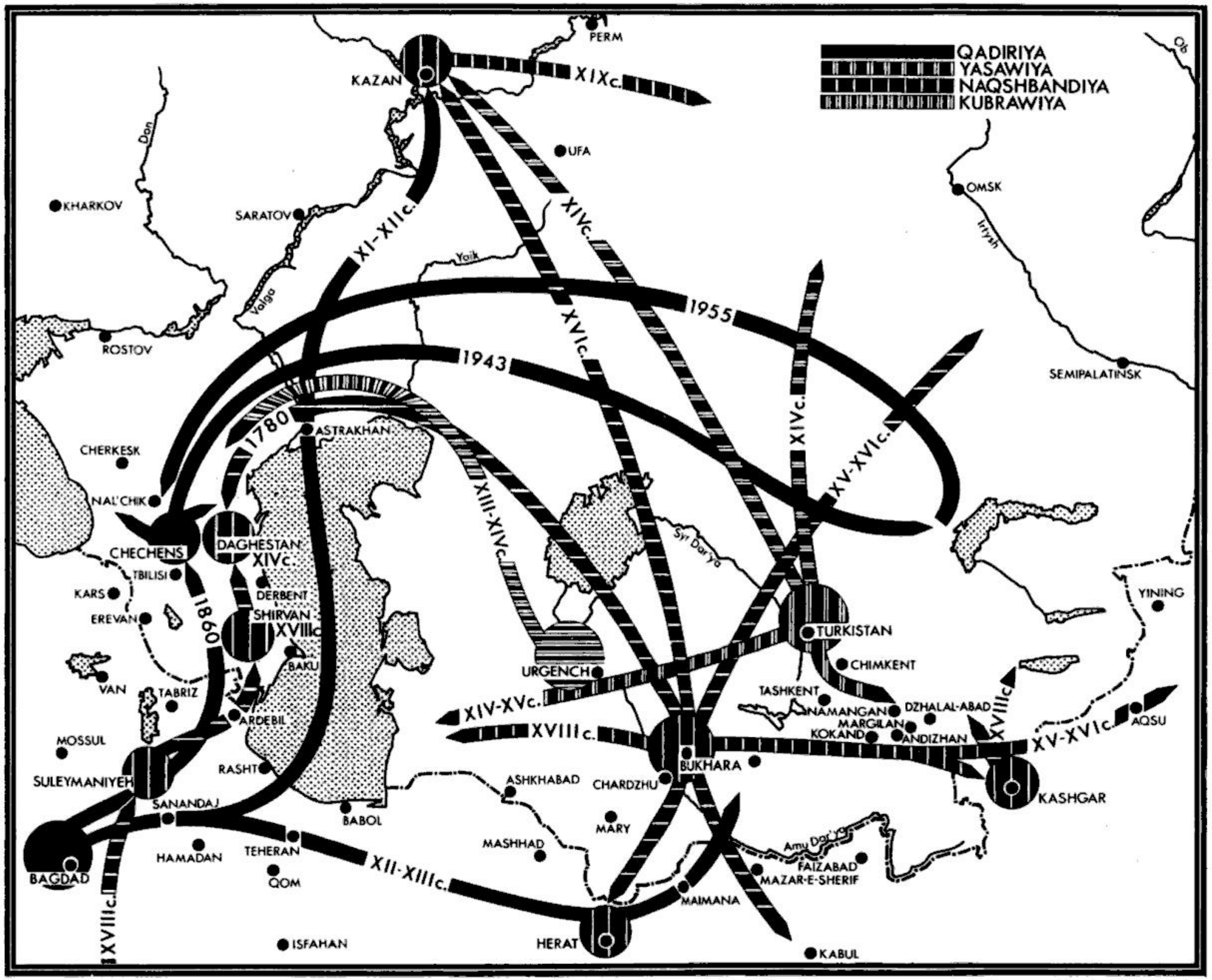
"The arrest of the sectarians [adepts of the Qadiriya brotherhood], the deportation of their leader, Kunta Haji . . . the Shali affair, where more than a hundred *zikrist* adepts perished, has sobered Chechnia and reduced the movement to the level of insignificant agitation. . . . The best elements in Chechnia are on our side. . . . The *zikrist* movement disappeared as rapidly as it appeared." (A. Ipolitov, from "Uchenie zikr ego posledovateli v Chechne i Argunskom Okruge", *Sbornik svedenii o Kavkazshikh gortsakh*, Tiflis, 1869, pp. 11, 15, 16)

"Today the sectarians [of the Batal Haji — the main branch of the Qadiriya in Chechnia] have been reduced to an insignificant minority. Their influence on the younger generation is nil." (A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal Haji*, Groznyi, 1968, p. 27)



Historical map showing the origins of the Sufi brotherhoods and their movement into the Russian Empire over time.

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1

INTRODUCTION

"Weakness and cowardice never saved anybody" (Imam Shamil)

Sufism is an important aspect of Islam throughout the world, and, we argue in this study, it is becoming increasingly important within the context of Islam in the Soviet Union as well. This is necessarily a qualitative judgement on our part, but it is one that receives support from a source that is both closer to the subject and more concerned about its implications: the Soviets themselves. The volume of work by Soviet specialists devoted to Sufism in their state, the content of these studies, and the political conclusions the Soviets draw from them should all alert us that Sufism in this unique social-political milieu is something of considerably more than anthropological interest.

Few individuals in the West who study the Soviet Union know much about Sufism. Among those who are aware of its existence, there is a good deal of wrong information, caused perhaps by the Soviets' own treatment of the subject as a militant, fanatical aberration. In this study we aim, at the very least, to define Sufism in its historical and Soviet context so that future examinations of Sufi phenomena can be better informed.

In the late 1960s, references to "parellel" or "Sufi" Islam began to appear with some frequency in the Soviet media. At first reports arrived mostly from the North Caucasus, but in the mid-1970s we began to receive them from Central Asia as well. After 1978 they became abundant from the latter region, due in all probability to Soviet concerns about the potential spillover effects of the Islamic Revolution in Iran and, one year later, of the Soviet invasion of one of the world's most staunchly Muslim countries, Afghanistan.

Today almost all Soviet publications on Islam treat conservative, fundamentalist trends and the Sufi brotherhoods, or *tariqa* (sing. *tariqat*). The terms "parallel" or "out of mosque" Islam ("fundamentalist" and "integrist" are never used) encompass a large spectrum of trends, currents, and movements represented by various conservative believers, who are united only by their desire to preserve the religious basis of their society and to maintain some elements of

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their specific Muslim way of life. They also have in common a more or less openly expressed hostility to Russians, whom they see as doubly wicked, being both conquerors and infidels. Some of these believers are members of the Sufi brotherhoods, but it is impossible to determine how many. On the other hand, not all Sufis in the Soviet Union are conservative or openly opposed to the Soviet establishment. The late mufti of Tashkent, Ziautdin Babakhanov, who was slavishly loyal to the Soviet regime, was a member of the Naqshbandiya brotherhood, and it is likely that his son Shamsutdin Babakhanov, the current mufti, is also a Naqshbandi. In some important territories of Central Asia, in particular in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, Sufism has not — for various historical reasons (analysed below) — been politicised, and today it plays no significant role in the intellectual, social, or political life of the Muslim community. Elsewhere however, in the North Caucasus, in Kirghizia, in parts of Kazakhstan, and notably in Turkmenistan, Sufi orders represent the organised vanguard of unorganised fundamentalist dissent. In an ironic way, the role of the Sufi brotherhoods today may be compared, *toutes proportions gardées*, to that of the Bolshevik Party in relation to the still unorganised proletariat during the early years of the Soviet regime.

Sufism, a corpus of techniques concerning the "journeying" of a mystic adept toward God, appeared in the first centuries of Islam. In the beginning, it was a purely individual experience based on the personal relationship between the disciple, or *murid*, and his master, variously called *sheikh*, *murshid*, *pir*, *ustad*, or *ishan*. The master alone was responsible for the progress of the student along the path, or *tariqat*, to God.

In the twelfth century, when for the first time in the history of the Muslim world Islam was threatened by infidel invaders — the Qara Khitai in the East, Crusaders in the West, Sufis assumed the role of defenders of the faith, and Sufism swelled into a popular mass movement of organised brotherhoods of adepts, who were grouped around a master and bound by compulsory rules which regimented every aspect of their life. The adept was admitted to the brotherhood after a simple initiation ceremony, and thereafter lived in close association with his master and other adepts until he reached a higher level of mystical knowledge. Only then was he permitted by his master to go out and teach his master's way to new disciples.

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Central Asia, which was a borderland of the Islamic world and which faced infidels on nearly all sides, became one of the most active areas of Sufi expansion. Several of the most important and celebrated brotherhoods were founded there: the Kubrawiya and Yasawiya brotherhoods in the twelfth century and the Naqshbandiya in the fourteenth. All three played leading roles during the period of Mongol expansion. After the conversion of the Mongol rulers to Islam in the fourteenth century, Sufi orders continued to be important political and social factors, representing as they did the popular side of Islam against the official hierarchy of the Muslim "clergy" or *ulema*. Later, in the seventeenth century, Sufi orders, especially the Naqshbandiya, assumed once again their historical role when they led the holy war, or *jihad*, against invading Buddhist Jungars.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the development of Sufism in the territories of the present-day Soviet Union followed three different patterns. In some areas, such as the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanates of Kokand and Khiva, where the Islamic character of society was not under immediate threat, not even from Russian conquest, Sufi orders became part of the ruling establishment: wealthy, prosperous, élitist, intellectually conservative (even stagnant), non-militant, and loyal — even submissive — to conquering rulers. During their conquest of Turkestan, the Russians in fact met with little resistance from the Sufi brotherhoods. In the same areas today (Uzbekistan and Tajikistan mainly), Soviet rulers continue to benefit from this heritage of non-resistance. In the 1920s, they even managed to co-opt a number of distinguished members of the Sufi élite to the Bolshevik cause.

In the Tatar regions of the Middle Volga, where the Muslim community was challenged and threatened in all fields by an overwhelmingly superior Russian presence, the Sufi orders assumed the leading role in the intellectual renaissance of the late nineteenth century. Many Naqshbandis, in particular, were in the forefront of the modernist liberal *jadid* reform movement.

In the North Caucasus, in the Turkmen steppes, in the Ferghana valley of Central Asia, and in those areas where Russian conquest was met by massive popular resistance, Sufi brotherhoods played the primary role in inspiring, organising and leading the fight. Sufi activity in these areas was similar to Sufi activity elsewhere in the world at about the same time: in North Africa against the French, in

Java against the Dutch, in the Punjab against the Sikhs and the British, and in Xinjiang against the Chinese. Partly as a result of its role in popular resistance, Sufism in these regions never acquired the same élitist character as it did elsewhere. Rather, it preserved and extended its popular roots.

Contrary to the situation in other countries that have Sufi orders (Iran, Afghanistan, Turkey, the Arab countries), where fundamentalist currents and organisations are independent and often opposed to Sufi activity, in the Soviet Union fundamentalist and radical Sufi tendencies are often, but not always, in harmony. In the particular case of the North Caucasus, Sufi orders have gained control not only over fundamentalist trends but also over all national resistance movements from the late eighteenth century to the present day.

Fundamentalism, in the context of the Russian/Soviet empire, is a desire to return to pure, unadulterated Islam, or in other words a rejection of *jadid* modernist trends, whose proponents attempted to discover in Western and Russian models solutions to chronic backwardness. The first manifestations of the fundamentalist desire appeared in the Tatar regions in the late nineteenth century with the *Qadymist* movement (''partisans of the 'old' ''); but the leaders of this movement were not Sufis, and their impact on the cultural life of the Tatar community was negligible. After the Bolshevik revolution fundamentalism appeared again, as Islamic modernist trends collapsed and disappeared from the cultural galaxy of Soviet Islam as a result of Marxism-Leninism in its Russian form becoming the compulsory belief system of the Soviet state.

But it was only in the 1960s that fundamentalism reappeared — to stay up till the present. At this time Muslim intellectuals began to search their own national past in the hope of discovering ideological roots for their societies other than Russian Marxism-Leninism and *jadidist* Islamic modernism. In their search through the past they encountered, among other legacies, the heritage of Sufism, not only in its cultural, intellectual and mystical aspects, but also in its militant holy war tradition, symbolised by the Caucasian Naqshbandiya and its two-centuries-long resistance to Russian domination. In this same period Soviet observers were discovering that the Sufi brotherhoods had not disappeared at the time of the Revolution and the great anti-religious drives (1928-39); on the contrary, they had gone underground, a self-imposed restriction from which they were now slowly emerging.

It is logical that these two trends, the poorly organised fundamentalist-intellectual and the highly structured Sufi-popular, should meet and, at critical junctures, merge. The product of this merger is what Soviet authorities call "parallel Islam". What follows is a cautious, preliminary attempt to examine this merger — fundamentalist Sufism in all of its many aspects.

2

STRUCTURE OF THE SUFI BROTHERHOODS

Profiles of the Main Sufi orders

Our current knowledge of the Sufi brotherhoods in the Soviet Union is based primarily on Soviet sources, and because of this one must exercise the kind of caution towards the reliability and objectivity of those sources that would be required in any examination of any aspect of Soviet society using this method. We lack evidence of the existence of Sufi brotherhoods in several important Muslim areas of the USSR: Tatarstan, Bashkiria and Transcaucasia, for example. This lack of material may be explained by the disappearance of the brotherhoods from these territories, by the ignorance of Soviet researchers,[1] or by official restrictions on this kind of research in the Soviet Union. Moreover, there is the problem of the conscientious manipulation of evidence — disinformation, in other terms — which makes understanding all the more difficult.[2]

With the exception of a few authentic Islamicists, such as Ia. G. Abdullin, N. Ashirov, T.S. Saidbaev and S.M. Demidov, Soviet anti-religious experts are not very competent to deal with Sufism. As a rule they make no distinction between different brotherhoods, speaking in vague or general terms about "Sufism", "ishans" or "tariqatists". Occasionally they use the terms "zikrist" and "murids": they use the first to designate all those who practice a loud *zikr* (Qadiris, Yasawis), while the latter term refers more specifically to the Naqshbandis. Less

1. Thus, for example, in his excellent analysis of Sufism in the Chechen-Ingush republic, S. Umarov obviously does not know that the *murids* he describes belong to the Naqshbandiya (cf. "Muridism s blizkogo rastoianiia", *Nauka i religiia*, no. 10, 1979, pp. 30-2. A less competent observer, Hajibekir Bokov (*Ateisty v nastuplenii*, Groznyi, 1968, p. 43), lists 25 "sectarian brotherhoods" (*bratsva*) in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR in 1940, an impossibly high figure. In reality there were only two brotherhoods there at that time: what Bokov takes for brotherhoods were probably groups of disciples of a Naqshbandi or Qadiri sheikh.
2. But there are many examples of total confusion. Thus, Kh.B. Mamleev, in his *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyii, 1970; p. 20, fn.), writes: "Today muridism has survived in a modified form only in Checheno-Ingushetia, in some districts of Daghestan and of Kazakhstan." This statement could be true for the Qadiriya but not for the Naqshbandiya.

frequently the terms "Sheptuny" (whisperers) — meaning Naqshbandis, who practice a silent *zikr* — and "Priguny" (jumpers) — referring to the Qadiris, whose *zikr* involves considerable physical movement — are used.[3] Identification is made more difficult by the phenomenon of syncretism, especially in Central Asia, where the adepts themselves are apt to ignore their attachment to one historical brotherhood or another.[4]

The brotherhoods of the Soviet Union are described below. Two interesting trends need to be noted here. The first is that during the Soviet period the brotherhoods, formerly centred mainly in the countryside and small towns, have made a rather striking appearance in the cities of Central Asia and the Caucasus; and secondly, this migration to the cities has been accompanied by a steady and persistent radicalisation and politicisation of the brotherhoods.

According to Soviet researchers,[5] four brotherhoods are currently active in the Soviet Union. These are the Naqshbandiya, the Qadiriya, the Yasawiya, and the Kubrawiya.

NAQSHBANDIYA

Founded in Bukhara by the sheikh Mohammed Bahautdin Naqshband (1317-89), this *tariqat* rapidly became the most important of all Sufi brotherhoods. Naqshbandi groups exist all over the Muslim world, from Morocco to Indonesia and from China to East Africa. From Bukhara the Naqshbandiya penetrated into the Middle Volga region in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, where it completely absorbed the Qadiri and Yasawi groups. It also penetrated into Chinese Turkestan; Kashgar became one of the most active centers of the brotherhood in the sixteenth century. From Kashgar, Naqshbandis brought Islam into present-day Kirghizia in the eighteenth century. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Naqshbandis emerged among the Turkmen tribes where they slowly absorbed the Yasawiya, which had dominated

3. Only "disinformation" can explain the statement of the mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov of Tashkent (himself a Naqshbandi) that the "Shadhliya *tariqat* dominates Daghestan." (Interview given by Babakhanov to the Kuwaiti journalist Fahmi Hawaydi; reproduced in the journal *Al-Arabi* of Kuwait, January 1980). In fact, the Shadhliya *tariqat* has never been introduced into Soviet territory.
4. This phenomenon of syncretism existed already in the nineteenth century. Pre-revolutionary Russian specialists of Central Asian Sufism generally ignore the different brotherhoods and speak only of "ishanism" or "dervishism".
5. O.S. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent, 1960), pp. 52-3.

that region. In the nineteenth century, Naqshbandis penetrated Khorezm, where they replaced the Kubrawiya. Late in the eighteenth century, they surfaced in Daghestan (via Shirvan and Kurdistan), and from there — in the middle of the nineteenth century — penetrated the Chechen territory and the mid- and western Caucasus.

Today the Naqshbandiya is represented in almost all Muslim areas of the Soviet Union. It dominates in Central Asia, in Daghestan, in northern Azerbaijan, and in eastern Chechnia. On the other hand, it has practically disappeared from the Cherkess territory of the northwestern Caucasus, and there is little evidence to suggest that it has survived after the 1917 revolution in the Tatar-Bashkir territory of the Middle Volga, formerly one of its main bastions.

The predominance of the Naqshbandiya over other brotherhoods may be explained by several factors. First, the Naqshbandiya has a double character, at once élitist and popular. From the time of Timur and his successors, the brotherhood has numbered among its adepts rulers, wealthy merchants, military leaders, intellectuals, landlords, and poets such as Ali-Shir Nava'i, Abdurrahman Jami and Mahtum Quli, as well as modest city-dwellers, craftsmen and even peasants.

Secondly, the Naqshbandiya has a unique ability to adapt to changing social and political conditions. An adept is not an ascetic: he remains "in the world" (*Khalwat dar anjoman* — "solitary in the world"; *Safar dar Vatan* — "journeying toward God while remaining in the world"). Thus, as an individual, the Naqshbandi adept is required to adjust his social behaviour to meet the requirements of everyday life: that is to say he must be socially flexible.

Thirdly, the Naqshbandiya is linguistically accessible to everyone. In Central Asia it has a Persian and Turkic character; in the Caucasus it assumes an Arabic character in addition to its Persian and Turkic forms.

Fourthly, the Naqshbandiya has gained immense prestige as a result of its providing the leadership in the holy wars against the Buddhist Kalmyks in Turkestan (seventeenth and eighteenth centuries) and against the Russians in the Caucasus, from Imam Mansur in 1783 to Imam Najmuddin of Hotso in 1920-1.

Fifthly, the Naqshbandiya is a highly decentralised order, which maintains its unity only through a community of purpose and the practice of a simple ritual — what we would today call, anachronistically, "a common ideology". Its activities are safeguarded

by the order's clandestine nature, of which the silent *zikr* is a perfect expression.

Finally, this order embodies what we might think of as doctrinal liberalism, in that it excludes fanaticism and radicalism. It is for this reason that the Naqshbandiya has been successful in superimposing itself on other brotherhoods, absorbing them without insisting on their elimination.

It is largely because of the Naqshbandiya that Sufism has been institutionalised and become an integral part of the political, social and cultural life of Central Asia since the fourteenth century and of the Caucasus since the middle of the nineteenth century.

If one is to judge by the intensity of Soviet anti-Sufi propaganda today, the Naqshbandiya appears to be particularly active in Daghestan, the eastern part of Chechnia, and the northern districts of Azerbaijan. In Central Asia it seems to have considerable strength in the eastern and southern regions of Turkmenistan, in the Ferghana valley (especially in its Kirghiz areas), in the Khorezm oasis of northern Turkmenistan and the Karakalpak republic. There is little evidence as to its activity in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

QADIRIYA

The Qadiriya was founded in Bagdad by Abd al-Qadir al-Ghilani (about 1166) and is probably by prestige and influence the second-most important of the Sufi orders. Qadiri groups exist in the Arab Middle East, in north Africa, Libya, Egypt, Sudan, Turkey, Afghanistan and India. As early as the twelfth century, this brotherhood was introduced by Arab merchants from Baghdad to the Kingdom of Bulgar on the Volga and to the cities of Turkestan, especially those of the Ferghana valley. In the twelfth-fourteenth centuries, the Qadiriya was absorbed by the Yasawyia in the Middle Volga region. In Central Asia, it was superseded in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries by the Naqshbandis; however, the Qadiriya survives today in the Ferghana valley.

Kunta Haji Kishiev, a Kumyk, brought the Qadiriya to the North Caucasus in the 1850s; for this reason Soviet sources call this transplanted order the "Kunta Haji *tariqat*", ignoring or neglecting its association with the old Qadiriya. The new brotherhood played an important role in the Islamisation of the Chechens and Ingush in the second part of the nineteenth century, but it has remained limited in this region. After the death of Kunta Haji, the brotherhood split into

several branches (*wird*) led by his followers (*vekils*). The most important of these branches are:

1. the Kunta Haji proper, which is active in Chechnia and in the mountainous parts of Daghestan;
2. the Bammat Giray *wird*, which has its centre in the aul of Avtura in the Ingush region and which today remains limited to the Chechen-Ingush ASSR;
3. the Batal Haji *wird*, with its centre in the auls of Surhohi, Yandyrka and Ekazhevo in the district of Nazran in Ingush territory. This *wird* is known to be very fanatical. In the beginning it was limited to Ingush alone, but today it has followers throughout the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, in northern Daghestan, and seems to be progressing steadily westward to the Muslim parts of north Ossetia and into the Kabardo-Balkar ASSR;
4. The Chim Mirza *wird*, with its centre in the aul of Mairtup in the district of Shali in Chechen territory. In Soviet literature this *wird* is also called "Barabanshchiki" (drummers). Today this *wird* has followers throughout the Chechen-Ingush ASSR.

In 1953, during the exile of North Caucasian mountaineers to Kazakhstan, another branch of Chim Mirza, Vis Haji, was identified. This *wird* is very radical and dynamic, and today it would appear to hold primacy of place among the Qadiriya branches. Vis Haji can claim followers in all the Chechen-Ingush territory, in Daghestan, in the central Caucasus (Ossetia, Kabarda), in Azerbaijan, and in Kazakhstan. In Soviet literature the Vis Haji are called "Beloshaposhniki" (white caps).

During the last twenty-five years, all Kunta Haji groups have been active in the North Caucasus and have expanded rapidly to northern Azerbaijan[6] and Daghestan,[7] domains formerly occupied primarily by

6. I.I. Datunashvili, "Materialy k kharakteristiki sovremennogo sostoianiia religioznosti v Belokanskom i Kakhskom raionakh (Azerbaidzhanskaia SSR)", in *Konkretnye issledovaniia sovremennykh religioznykh verovanii* (Moscow, 1967), p. 192, lists Sufi groups practising loud *zikr*.
7. I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy Amaia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Makhach-Qala, 1965), p. 28 (in the district of Hasav-Yurt); G.A. Angutaev, "Aktivno, Nastupatel'no", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1975, p. 18 (in the district of Andi and Botlikh); M.A. Abdullaev, M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), new Kunta Haji groups in the districts of Gumbetov, Botlikh, and Hasav-Yurt; S.Murtazalieva, "Bor'ba idei i svoboda sovesti", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 2, 1981, p. 65 (Vis Haji adepts in the districts of Hasav-Yurt and Gumbetov); and Sh. Ismailov, "Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1981, p. 4 (Kunta Haji in the district of Botlikh).

the Naqshbandiya. Contrary to what one finds in Central Asia, there is no Sufi syncretism in the North Caucasus: Naqshbandis and Qadiris, who appear to be more dynamic in the North Caucasus, have strictly different profiles. Soviet experts have tried in vain to explain Qadiri dynamism in this region (which can be compared to the expansion of this *tariqat* in the 1860s and 1870s after the defeat of Shamil). The following explanations will suffice:

1. Contrary to the decentralised Naqshbandiya, all Caucasian Qadiri groups are strongly centralised bodies. They are tied together by rigid discipline and personal devotion to their hereditary sheikh. In the Soviet Union, the Qadiriya is more radical, more aggressive and more suited to clandestinity than the Naqshbandiya.
2. Some especially radical groups, such as the Batal Haji or the Vis Haji, are completely "closed societies" which are well protected from the outside world. They are thus better suited for conspiratorial work than the more open Naqshbandiya.
3. The loud *zikr* of the Qadiriya is highly emotional and has an aesthetic quality with a potent appeal.
4. Where the Naqshbandiya is relatively tolerant of political and social Soviet reality, the Qadiriya rejects it, which apparently appeals to a great many people.[8]

YASAWIYA

The centre of this brotherhood is the town of Turkistan (ancient Yassy), in the Chimkent region of the Kazakh SSR. Formerly a mystical brotherhood more detached from world affairs than either the Naqshbandiya or the Qadiriya, the Yasawiya has always had a more limited reach. In the Tatar regions of the Middle Volga this brotherhood was absorbed by the Naqshbandiya; among the Turkmen tribes, the same process is almost completed.[9] Today Yasawi groups

8. It is an observable phenomenon in the communist world that the more unyielding and intractable religious "fanatics" frequently survive better than "liberals" who are prepared to compromise with the atheistic establishment. Thus, for example, the most active and popular Sufi brotherhood in Bosnia today is the Rifa'i, the so-called "Howling Dervishes".
9. The survival of the Yasawiya in Turkmenistan is due to the immense prestige enjoyed by the so-called Holy Tribes (Awlad, Ovlad) — Ata, Shikh, Seyid, Magtym, Khoja, Müjevir — who descend from the first four Caliphs and provide the leaders (sheikhs) of all Turkmen Sufi groups. Historically, the ancestors of these tribes have been associated either with Ahmed Yasawi himself or his disciples. Cf. S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady* (Ashkhabad, 1978).

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exist in the Ferghana valley and in southern Kazakhstan. Two radical offshoots of the Yasawiya, the Laachi and the Hairy Ishans, both highly politicised, survive today.

The majority of Laachi are peasants and live in monolithic Laachi villages, particularly in the district of Frunze, Batken, and Leylek of the Osh region of the Kirghiz SSR and in some eastern districts of the Uzbek part. Most belong to Kirghiz clans: Zhookesek (the majority), Kandy, Nayman, Qypchaq and Boston.

The Hairy Ishans are mostly city-dwellers. They are more numerous but are difficult to locate due to the purely underground character of their brotherhood. The centre of the *tariqat* is the city of Arslanbob in the Kirghiz SSR and in the village of Chilgazy, near the city of Suluktu in the Osh region.[10] Adepts are located in Kirghizia (Osh and Jelalabad regions) and in Uzbekistan (Ferghana, Namangan, Andizhan, and Margelan regions). According to S. Mambetaliev, the Hairy Ishan brotherhood has *murids* in the industrial centres of Qzyl-Kiya and Suluktu.[11] Unlike other Yasawiya, Hairy Ishans practice a silent *zikr*.

KUBRAWIYA

The spiritual centre of this brotherhood is in Kunia-Urgench, Turkmenistan SSR, at the tomb of the founder Najmuddin Kubra. The order has always been limited to Khorezm and to the delta of the Amu-Darya (Karakalpak ASSR, the Khorezm region of the Uzbek SSR, and northern Turkmenistan). After 1873 the brotherhood was almost completely absorbed by the Naqshbandis from Bukhara, and survives today only among peasants.[12] Before the Russian conquest, the Kubrawis practised a loud *zikr*, but today they appear to practise the silent *zikr* of the Naqshbandis.

"IRREGULAR" MURIDS

Those adepts who know to which brotherhood they belong constitute only part of the total number of Sufi adepts in the Soviet Union. Soviet

10. S Mambetaliev, *Sufizm Zhana anyng Qyrgyzstandagy agymdary* (Frunze, 1969), p. 45.
11. Ibid., pp. 45-6.
12. There are few references to the Kubrawis. See E.T. Smirnov, *Dervishizm v Turkestane* (Tashkent, 1898), pp. 17-20; O.A. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent, 1960), pp. 52-3. The latter claims (p. 52) that Kubrawi adepts are still numerous in Khorezm.

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researchers have noted the presence throughout Central Asia of a large number of "irregular" *murids*, whose affiliation is unclear. Some of these are probably not real Sufis at all but are former regular clerics, imam-khatibs, mullahs, muezzins, and others whose mosques have been closed by Soviet decree (especially during the Krushchev years) and who, according to L. Klimovich, "having lost their parish, refused to lead an honest working life and became vagabonds [*brodiagi*]".[13] O.A. Sukhareva, alone among Soviet specialists, classifies some of these "irregulars" as members of a special Sufi "brotherhood", the Kalendariya, which was founded by a certain sheikh Safa of Samarkand. These vagabond Kalenders have no *zikr*. They would appear to be more numerous in the rural areas of Uzbekistan and in Tajikistan.[14]

Even farther from the "regular" brotherhoods are the *divana* ("the possessed ones"), who are comparable to the Afghan, Khorassani or Indian *majzub* and to the Afghan and Indian *malang*: part Sufi adept, part witch-doctor. Furthermore, according to V.N. Basilov, Central Asia, especially Khorezm, is the home of a few authentic shamans.[15]

At the other end of the spectrum, we find in the cities of Central Asia, including in Tashkent, groups of believers who form what Soviet researchers call "sects", which are probably Sufi groups of Nagshbandi pursuasion. To this category belongs the curious group of Ahl-i Quran ("People of the Quran"), which was founded in Tashkent after the Second World War in order to defend the purity of the faith, and another clandestine group in the town of Osh, probably founded about the same time "to promote religious education among Muslim children". Both groups are described by Saidbaev.[16]

Historical background

Sufism has played an important role in three areas of the present day Soviet Union: Central Asia, the Tatar country (Middle Volga) and the North Caucasus.

Central Asia is the birthplace of several famous brotherhoods,

13. L. Klimovich, "Bor'ba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1966), vol. II, p. 67.
14. Sukhareva, op. cit., p. 53.
15. V.N. Basilov, *Kul't sviatykh v Islame* (Moscow, 1970).
16. T.S. Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1978), p. 192 fn.

as noted above, where Sufi orders represented both the popular face of Islam (especially in the thirteenth century) and its "élitist" aspect (especially under the Timurid and the Shaybanid rule from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries). Sufi orders were responsible for the preservation of Islam at the time of the Mongol invasion, and in the 17th-18th and 19th centuries the Naqshbandiya headed the resistance to the Buddhist (Oirots and Kalmuks) and Russian invaders, which often took the character of a religious war (*jihad*).

In the Tatar country Sufism, introduced from the Middle East as early as the twelfth century, played a major cultural role from the thirteenth to the twentieth century, but the brotherhoods there did not participate actively in the armed resistance against the Russians. Today we have little evidence of their survival.

In the North Caucasus, Sufism was introduced at a later period (late eighteenth century), but from the beginning it monopolised the leadership of the national resistance movements against the invading Russians. After the defeat of Shamil and the massive exodus of the Cherkess tribes to the Ottoman empire (second half of the nineteenth century), Sufism disappeared from the northwest Caucasus but remained an important political and cultural factor in the central (Checheno-Ingush territory) and the northeastern Caucasus (Daghestan).

Sufi Brotherhoods in the Northeast Caucasus. The northeastern Caucasus, an area situated between the Dariyal Pass and the Caspian Sea comprising the Chechen-Ingush territory and Daghestan, was among the last Muslim territories to which the Sufi brotherhoods gained access, but once established there Sufism played a prominent role. Today this territory is probably the one where organised mystic movements are the most dynamic and active in the entire Muslim world. To appreciate their importance, we must remember that according to the 1979 Soviet census, this territory contained a Muslim population of some 2,700,000 people. Before the October Revolution it was a bulwark of a rigorously conservative Islam. The professional "clerics", or "Arabists" as they were called (most of them members of the Naqshbandiya brotherhood), represented a highly influential group of over 40,000 persons, that is about 5 per cent of the total Muslim population.[17] In 1913, there were 2,060 mosques and 800 *medressehs* in Daghestan, plus 806 mosques and 427 *medressehs* in the

17. Najmuddin Samurskii (Efendiev), *Dagestan* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1925), p. 129.

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Chechen territory, while in the nearby Azerbaijan (with a mixed Sunni and Shi'a population) in 1917 there were 2,000 mosques and 786 *meddressehs*. Najmuddin Samurski, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Daghestan, who can hardly be suspected of sympathy for his antagonists, wrote in 1925 with obvious admiration:

> Daghestan has been for centuries the seat of Arab culture. Those sheikhs, imams, alims and mutalims whom we meet in each aul are scholars well versed in Arabic, who have thoroughly studied the ancient Arabic culture, science and philosophy and have penetrated all the subtleties of Muslim religion. Many among them are famous Arabists known throughout the entire Muslim world. Thousands of disciples from all Muslim lands of Russia, from Turkey and Persia used to visit them. They were hallowed by the glamour of profound learning and their words were law . . . In Daghestan, Muslim clerics were the only power with which the Soviet State had to reckon . . . Revolution in Daghestan was mainly a struggle against Muslim clerics . . .[18]

Sixty years after the Revolution only twenty-seven mosques remain in Daghestan, nine in the Chechen-Ingush Republic and sixteen in Azerbaijan. No religious schools survive in the Caucasus, and the number of "registered" clerics placed under the control of the two Muslim Spiritual Directorates of Makhach-Qala (Sunni for the North Caucasus) and Baku (mixed Shi'a and Sunni for Trancaucasia) is probably fewer than 300. No religious publications exist, and there is no apparent religious intellectual life. Thus the efforts of the Soviet authorities seem to have succeeded, and Islam (similar to the other religions practised in the Soviet Union) has been reduced to the status of a "private affair", its leaders being deprived of all possibility to express themselves or to play any part whatsoever in the cultural, social and political life of the community.

Viewed from a certain rather superficial "statistical" angle, such appears to be the fate of subjugated Islam in the Caucasus. However, a closer and deeper study reveals a different and paradoxically optimistic

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During the same period, the clerical class in Russia represented less than 0.1% of the Christian Orthodox population.

18. Ibid., pp. 129-30.

picture: although submitted to ceaseless and unrelenting anti-religious pressure, Islam still exhibits a formidable vitality. One need only look at adherence to Muslim custions. Circumcision, which in the Soviet Union is still the mark of allegiance to Islamic tradition, is practiced by almost 100 per cent of all Muslim families, including those of Communist Party members. Religious ceremonies are observed at marriages and especially burials by the great majority of the population. Mixed marriages between Muslims and non-Muslims continue to be rare. Recent sociological surveys in the North Caucasus show that the proportion of Muslims observing religious rites in one way or another is still high: around 80 per cent (compare this to the 12-15 per cent among the formerly Christian Russians). Less than 20 per cent of the North Caucasian Muslims identify themselves as ''atheists'' (against 60-70 per cent among Russians). A joint survey conducted in 1970-2 in the Chechen-Ingush Republic by the Institute of Scientific Atheism of the Academy of Social Sciences of the USSR and the Laboratory of Social Research of the Chechen *obkom* of the Communist Party revealed the prevailance in this territory of a ''collective conservative'' public opinion which forces local atheists to hide their anti-religious ideas:[19] an astonishing conclusion coming, as it does, sixty years after the triumph of a Marxist revolution the aim of which was the total uprooting of religion in the newly created society.

How can we explain the paradox of this obvious and deep vitality of Islam co-existing side by side with the no less obvious and profound destruction and decay of Islamic religious and cultural institutions? Soviet sources have been endeavouring until quite recently to explain it away by the classical ''confusion between religious and national traditions''. Such an explanation is barely adequate. To survive without descending into superstition and animism, a religious creed depends upon the authoritative guidance of a class of ''professional'' leaders, that is of clerics who are competent to perform the consecrated rites and who know enough Arabic to recite prayers and to read and explain the sacred texts. Soviet propagandists have always viewed the clergy as the weak link in the Islamic chain, believing that if the clerics were destroyed or brought to heel then the appeal of Islam could be weakened and hence the threat to the regime posed by Muslim believers with sharply divided loyalties could be eliminated. To this

19. V.G. Pivovarov, ''Sotsiologicheskoe issledovanie problem byta, kul'tury, natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR'', *Voprosy nauchnogo ateisma* (Moscow), no. 17, 1975, p. 318.

end Soviet practice has focused on eliminating Muslim clergy where and when possible and reducing the authority of those clerics who remain. This, of course, is the same approach as is used against other religions, where it has been considerably more successful. Such a comparison should alert us to the differences between "church-bound" religions, such as Orthodox Christianity, and dynamic religio-cultural systems which embrace all aspects of human existence, such as Islam.

It is for this important reason that Islam has survived in the officially aetheist Soviet Union in spite of — or perhaps because of — the extensive overlapping attacks directed at it by successive Soviet administrations. Because Muslims do not cease to be active believers when their mosque is closed — for a mosque has little of the proprietary significance in Islam that a church has in Christianity — Islam is an elusive target. It cannot be attacked and destroyed by one frontal assault; rather, all aspects of its manifestations in daily life must be assaulted simultaneously. To date, Soviet material and intellectual resources have not been able to rise to this challenge; moreover, where mosques have been closed, an extensive and complex — but largely uncoordinated — unofficial network of "parallel" or "unofficial" Islam has gained sufficient strength and dynamism in the last forty years to outdistance the official Islamic establishment, which is represented by the four Muslim Spiritual Directorates. Within parallel Islam, Sufis play an important, perhaps determinant role. Lucian Klimovich, the leading Soviet specialist in anti-Islamic propaganda, explains:

> In Sunni as well as in Shi'a Islam there exist two trends: the "mosque" trend led by the muftis, the sheikh ul-Islam and other representatives of the four Official Spiritual Directorates, and the "non-mosque" trend. This last one is a communitarian, clannic, Sufi-dervish or *murid* trend directed by the *ishans*, *pirs*, *sheikhs* and *ustads* whose adepts live mainly outside the cities, in the auls and the kishlaks. Both trends have coexisted from the Middle Ages and have been competing with each other for centuries to gain control over the believers. In the last years the struggle between the mosque trend and the Sufi trend has become more intense . . . but everywhere [in the USSR] today the Muslim clerics of the Sufi trend are much more numerous than the official "registered" clerics. In some areas, for instance in the North Caucasus and especially in the Chechen-Ingush territory, practically all the Muslim clerics belong to the one or the other of the *murid*-dervish brotherhoods.[20]

20. L.I. Klimovich, "Bor'ba Ortodoksov i Modernistov v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow), no. 2, 1966, pp. 66-7.

The Naqshbandiya. The Naqshbandiya penetrated the northeastern Caucasus at a relatively recent date. It seems that the first Naqshbandi to preach in the North Caucasus was sheikh Mansur Ushurma, a Chechen from the aul of Aldy. There is no formal indication that he was a Naqshbandi, and we do not know who his *murshid* was; however, according to oral tradition in Chechnia-Daghestan, he belonged to the Naqshbandiya and had been initiated either in Bukhara or by some Bukharian Naqshbandi travelling through the North Caucasus to Mecca. Some Russian sources confirm his Central Asian origins. For instance, N.V. Khanykov in his *Muridism and Murids*[21] speaks of Mansur erroneously as "a native of Orenburg steppes", who borrowed his science and his fanaticism from the Bukharans or may himself have been a native of Bukhara. Other authors, including the Daghestani Hasan al-Qadari,[22] claim that he was initiated somewhere in the Ottoman Empire and was sent by the Turks to incite the Chechens and the Daghestanis to join in a *jihad* against the Russians. However, analysis of the Ottoman archival material suggests that Turkish authorities knew nothing of Mansur's activities before his first success over the Russians in 1785.[23] The theory of Anatolian origins is therefore doubtful.

After his victory in 1785 in the battle of the Sunzha river where he destroyed an entire Russian brigade, Mansur called the mountaineers to holy war against the enroaching infidels and for some years unified practically the whole of North Caucasus, from the Chechen territory in the west to the Kumyk steppes in the east. His appeal — at least, what we know of it — sounds very much like the appeals to *jihad* by Naqshbandi *murshids* of later date, especially by Mohammed of Yaraglar. Imam Mansur tried unsuccessfully to arouse the western Caucasian Circassian tribes. Finally, he was captured by the Russians in the Ottoman fortress of Anapa in 1791. He was treated as a rebel, sentenced to life imprisonment, and died in the fortress of Schlusselburg two years later. The first Naqshbandi leader to preach holy war in Chechnia and Daghestan, Mansur left no successor there.

21. *Kavkaz*, (Tiflis), no. 15, 1847.
22. *Asar-i Dagestan* (Russian translation), (Makhach-Qala, 1929), p. 114.
23. A. Bennigsen, "Un mouvement populaire au Caucase au XVIIIe siècle. La guerre sainte du sheikh Mansur (1785-1791): page mal connue et controversée des relations russo-turques", *Cahiers du Monde Russe et Soviétique*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 159-205. This article is based on Ottoman archival materials.

His adventure was too brief, and Russian repression was too severe. It is also possible that all his followers, adepts of the *tariqat*, disappeared with him. Be that as it may, the Naqshbandiya vanished from the Caucasian scene for the next thirty years.

The second chapter of the Naqshbandiya adventure in the North Caucasus is better known. The order reappeared in the early 1920s in Shirvan and from there spread to central Daghestan and to Avaristan. The *silsile*, or lineage, is clearly established:

> Sheikh Ismail of Kürdemir was the first Naqshbandi *murshid* to preach in northern Shirvan. He was the disciple of the Kurdish sheikh Khalid of Suleymaniyeh, himself a disciple of an Indian Naqshbandi, the Sheikh Abdullah of Delhi. Isma'il of Kürdemir initiated the sheikh Khas-Mohammed, a Shirvani or, according to other sources, a Bukharian, who initiated sheikh Mohammed Efendi of Yaraglar (or Yukari Yarag) in the Khanate of Kurin in southern Daghestan, who was the first to preach *jihad* in 1825. He initiated: Jemaleddin of Kazi Kumukh, in Central Daghestan, who was the master of Ghazi Mohammed, first *imam*, and of Shamil, third *imam* of Daghestan.[24]

Henceforth, the Naqshbandiya *tariqat* was to play a very important role in Caucasian history. Iron discipline, total dedication to its ideals and the strict hierarchy on which it was based explain the epic resistance of the Caucasian mountaineers to Russian conquest — a resistance that lasted from 1824 till 1855 — in which not only all the leaders of the movement but also the local authorities (*naibs*) and the majority of the fighters were Naqshbandis. It can be said that the nearly fifty-year-long Caucasian wars made an important contribution to the material and moral ruin of the Tsarist empire and hastened the downfall of the Romanov monarchy.

The brotherhood achieved another deep and long-lasting result: it transformed the half-pagan mountaineers into strict orthodox Muslims, and introduced Islam into the animist areas of upper Chechnia and among the Circassian tribes of the western Caucasus.

The final defeat of *muridism* in 1859 and the subsequent massive migration of the Caucasian Muslims to Turkey did not destroy the Naqshbandiya in Daghestan and Chechnia; its roots had spread too

24. The complete *silsile* of the Caucasian Naqshbandi sheikhs is given in Jamaleddin of Kuzikumukh's *Adab ul-Marziya*, Russian translation in *Sbornik Svedenii o Kavkazskikh Gorsakh* (Tiflis), no. 2, 1869, pp. 8-9.

wide and too deep. Nevertheless, it was considerably weakened by the crisis. After 1859 Jemaleddin of Kazi-Kumukh, the Naqshbandi *murshid* of Shamil's time, left Daghestan for Turkey, where he died. Two of his successors whom he had designated before Shamil's defeat — Haqalu Mohammed of Kazi Kumukh and Haji 'Ali Asker of Tsakhul (a Shirvani, native of Kuba) — both left for Mecca where they died. Haji Nasrollah of Kabir in the Khanate of Kürin was killed in 1859 in the battle of Gunib, the last stronghold of Shamil. Haji 'Abdurrahman of Sogratl, the main religious authority in Daghestan after Jemaleddin's departure, took an active part in the uprising in Daghestan and Chechnia in 1877; he was subsequently arrested by the Russians and died in Siberia. His son and *murid*, Mohammed Efendi, who succeeded him as leader of the revolt, was also arrested and later left for Turkey. Mohammed Efendi of Usukh in the Khanate of Kürin was the only one to return to Daghestan in the 1880s after a pilgrimage to Mecca. He began to initiate new *murids*.

Thus for some twenty years, between 1859 and 1880, the activity of the *tariqat* was at a standstill. The leaders were either killed, died in Russian jails, or had left the country. The rank and file of adepts, discouraged by defeat, ruthless repression and the military occupation of the country by the Russian army, went over the another brotherhood, the Qadiriya.

The Qadiriya and its offspring. The Qadiriya, an order founded in Baghdad in the twelfth century, penetrated the Caucasus at a much later date, in the early 1850s, when the resistance movement of the mountaineers headed by the Naqshbandis seemed already doomed. It was first introduced by a Daghestani shepherd named Kunta Haji Kishiev, a native of the Kumyk village of Inkho but who lived in the Chechen aul of Eliskhan Yurt in the district of Gudermes. According to legend, he was initiated into the order during his pilgrimage to Mecca at the tomb of its founder in Baghdad. Back in Chechen territory, Kunta Haji started his religious activities but was obliged to leave on a second *haj* to Mecca because of the hostile attitude of the fighting Naqshbandis towards his pacifist sermons. He returned only in 1861 after Shamil's final defeat and the collapse of the Naqshbandi holy war.

Kunta Haji preached non-resistance to evil and the acceptance of infidel domination, slogans that were popular among the war-weary

mountaineers. The order, which took the name "Kunta Haji *tariqat*" in the Caucasus, practised the loud *zikr* as opposed to the silent *zikr* of the Naqshbandis, with ecstatic dances, songs and later even music, all practices forbidden by Shamil and the Naqshbandiya. Their credo, at least at the beginning, was more mystical, ascetic and detached from wordly problems than that of the Naqshbandis. The new *tariqat* enjoyed an immediate and spectacular success especially in Chechnia, in the Avar country and in northern Daghestan, that is in the areas where the war effort had been particularly strong and where Russian pressure had been especially severe. From Chechnia, the Qadiri *murids* penetrated into the still animist Ingushetia, a territory still at that time untouched by Islam, which they converted by the 1870s.

Very rapidly Kunta Haji was faced with the same problem that had confronted the leaders of the Naqshbandiya in the early 1820s: is it possible for a mystic to travel along the path leading to God without joining the *jihad* against infidel domination of a Muslim land? The very logic of Russian rule, oppressive and often unbearable, called for a negative answer. As one Soviet historian writes:

> The majority of Kunta Haji's adepts were former warriors of Shamil. Disappointed by the oppression of the tsarist administration and conscious of the power of their new organisation, the *murids* began to switch from the slogan of "non-resistance to evil" to the idea of direct action against Russian adminstration.[25]

In 1862-3 a wave of unrest swept over Chechnia, and early in January 1864 the Russian authorities, frightened by the fast-growing number of Qadiriya *murids* and convinced that a new revolt was unavoidable, arrested and deported Kunta Haji and several dozen of his *murids*. On 18 January 1864 some 4,000 *murids* who had gathered in the village of Shali (Chechnia) were dispersed by gunfire; 200 of them were killed, about 1,000 were wounded, and many were arrested and deported.

Kunta Haji died in May 1867 in a Russian jail. His *tariqat* was not officially outlawed, but the loud *zikr* was strictly forbidden, and

25. A.A. Salamov, "Pravda o sviatykh mestakh v Checheno-Ingushetii", *Trudy Checheno-Ingushskogo Nauchno-Issledovatel'skogo Instituta pri Sovete Ministrov Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR* (Groznyi), no. 9, 1964, p. 162.

Russian authorities encouraged a massive emigration of Qadiris to Turkey. In 1865 some 5,000 Chechen families left the North Caucasus for the Ottoman Empire. But despite all this, the expansion of the Qadiriya order was not slowed.

In 1877, the two *tariqa*, Naqshbandiya and Qadiriya, took an active part in the great rebellion in Chechnia-Daghestan. The leader of insurgents in Daghestan, the sheikh Haji Mohammed (son of the Sheikh Abdurrahman of Sogratl'), was a Naqshbandi, and among his followers there were many Naqshbandi adepts. In Chechnia, on the other hand, most of the insurgents or *ghazis* were Qadiris. Those leaders who had not been killed in battle were nearly all hanged, and thousands of *murids* were deported to Siberia. But once more, by a strange paradox, the defeat of the 1877-8 revolt, far from marking the decline of the *tariqa* in the North Caucasus, served as a starting point for a new period of a spectacular expansion: "Between 1877 and the 1917 Revolution, almost all of the adult population of Chechnia-Ingushetia belonged either to the Naqshbandiya or to the Qadiriya *tariqat*."[26] The same was true to a less extent in Daghestan.

Nevertheless, the defeat of 1877 marked a turning point in the nature of the Sufi brotherhood's activity in the North Caucasus. For a while, the idea of holy war had been discarded,[27] and both *tariqa* acquired the character of underground semi-conspiatorial organisations. Between 1879 and 1917, in spite of the fresh recollections of two major defeats and the severe repression (many of the leaders were arrested and deported to Siberia),[28] the Sufi brotherhoods acquired considerable prestige in the region.

To appreciate how exceptional that was in the context of the time,

26. Ibid.
27. At least in its open form. It survived in the *abrek* tradition (banditry of honour). Several *murids* and even *murshids* of the *tariqa* were *abreks*, for instance the Chechen sheikh Deni Arsanov, the third Naqshbandi *murshid* of the so-called "Aksay dynasty" in the late 1890s.
28. For instance, sheikh Elikhan of Shiddy Yurt, the second Naqshbandi *murshid* of the "Aksay dynasty" was deported in 1890 to Siberia where he died; his successor, the sheikh Deni Arsanov, killed those responsible for the deportation of Elikhan and became an *abrek*; the Naqshbandi sheikh Uzun Haji, the future leader of the mountaineers in 1918-20, spent fifteen years in a Siberian camp and was released only after February 1917. In Central Asia the Naqshbandi *ishan*, Madali of Mintübe, the leader of the Andizhan uprising, was hanged by the Russians, and the Tatar Naqshbandi sheikh Bahautdin Vaisov died in a Russian psychiatric hospital.

one must keep in mind that elsewhere in the Muslim world mystical orders were losing their political influence and were being pushed into the background by liberal or radical *jadid* reform movements, which flourished with extraordinary vigour in Volga, Tatar, Crimean and Azeri Islam. By a strange historical reverse, the Sufi orders in the Caucasus, far from waning, practically absorbed official Islam. Nearly all the "arabists" and *ulemas* of Daghestan and Chechnia were members of a *tariqat*, and they identified themselves with the national resistance against Russian pressure.

During this same period a certain equilibrium was established between the old Naqshbandiya and the newer Qadiriya. The former attracted the wealthier and the more aristocratic and learned elements, while the latter, with its simpler creed and its ecstatic dances and loud *zikr*, was more popular among the poorer and less cultivated rural population. Geographically, Naqshbandiya predominated in the eastern part of the North Caucasus (Daghestan), whereas Qadiris were located in the Chechen-Ingush country. However, during the 1880s and 1890s a certain territorial symbiosis took place between the two orders. An "Aksay dynasty" of Naqshbandiya, founded in 1873 by a Kumyk *murshid* (probably a disciple of Sheikh Abdurrahman of Sogratl'), Sheikh Bashir from the Aksay aul in the Hasav Yurt district of northern Daghestan, moved westward into Chechen territory. Sheikh Bashir's successor, the second *murshid* of the dynasty, Sheikh Elikhan, also a Kumyk, established his headquarters in the aul of Shidy-Yurt in Chechnia. He was arrested and deported to Siberia. Sheikh Deni-Arsanov, his successor, a Chechen from Ken-Yurt and a "bandit of honour", or *abrek*, for many years raided the Terek Cossack settlements and enjoyed a reputation of great piety. He was finally killed in battle by the Cossacks with many of his *murids* in 1917.

The Qadiriya, centred in Chechnia, expanded similarly in two directions: westward towards Ingushetia and Ossetia and eastward in the direction of Daghestan. After Kunta Haji's deportation in 1864 and his death three years later, his *tariqat* split into four groups with his former *vekils* at their head. These were

— *Bammat Giray Haji Mitaev*, from the aul of Avtura in Chechnia. His brotherhood was, at the beginning, limited to one Chechen clan, the Gunoy *taipa*, but later it extended to the entire Chechen nation. Leadership was hereditary in the Mitaev family.

— *Batal Haji Belhoroev*, of the aul of Surhohi in the district of Nazran. Restricted at first to the Ingush territory, this *tariqat* subsequently

gained adepts in the Chechen territory and in northern Daghestan. From the start the Batal Haji group was conspicuous by its radical puritanism. The adepts were not supposed to marry outside the *wird*, nor were they allowed to share a meal with the uninitiated. Music was banned from the *zikr*. The principles of *jihad* were strictly observed: indeed, during the century-long life of this order, almost all its leaders met with violent death at the hands of Tsarist and Soviet authorities. The leadership of the *tariqat* was and still is restricted to the Belhoroev family.

— *Chim Mirza* of Mayrtup in the Shali district of Chechnia.

— *The regular brotherhood of Kunta Haji*, which was directed after the death of the founder by six of his former *vekils*: Omar Haji, a Kumyk in north Daghestan; Qahraman Haji, a Chechen of the aul of Shali; Husein Haji of Plievo, in Ingushetia; Gharabig Haji of Nazyr-Korta, in the Nazran district of Ingushetia; Rajab Dibir Aliev of Tsumada, in Avaristan; and Yusuf Haji of Mahkema, in the district of Vedeno in Chechnia.

After August 1917, a Congress of Daghestani *ulemas* and religious leaders held in the aul of Andi in Avaristan, proclaimed the Naqshbandi sheikh Najmuddin of Hotso (or Gotso; in Russian *Gotsinski*) imam of Daghestan and Chechnia, resuming in that way the tradition of North Caucasian Imamate abandoned in 1859 with the capture of Shamil. During the tragic revolutionary years of 1917-21, which were especially bloody in the northeastern Caucasus, the Sufi brotherhoods played a central role. This was particularly true for the Naqshbandiya, which was once more at the forefront of the activity. The aim pursued by the *tariqat* was to restore a theocratic monarchy governed by the Shari'yat law, the expulsion of Russians, and the liquidation of ''bad Muslims'' who had committed themselves to the infidel rulers. The following was one of the sayings of the Naqshbandi sheikh, Uzun Haji, one of the leaders of the brotherhood: 'If so God wills, we shall construct a Shari'yat monarchy, for, in a Muslim land there can be no republic. Were we to accept a republic, we would thereby renounce the Calife, which would be paramount of renouncing the Prophet and finally God himself.'[29] And somewhat more to the point: 'I am weaving a rope to hang engineers, students and in general all those who write from left to right.'

The Daghestani communist leader, Najmuddin Samurski, commenting on his opponent, wrote:

29. Quoted by Najmuddin Samurskii, *Dagestan*, op. cit., p. 65.

Uzun Haji was a learned arabist, a most violent fanatic, a strict shari'yatist and a devoted panislamist. He never accepted Tsarist power and fought his entire life for the liberation of the Caucasus from the Russian yoke. He saw in the [October] Revolution the possibility of liberating the mountaineers. All Russians were his enemies, the White even more than the Bolsheviks. . . . A very short man, almost a dwarf, Uzun Haji was renowned for his extreme courage, his firm character and his tremendous willpower. It is because of his qualities that he succeeded in establishing his rule over Avaristan (north Daghestan) and in Chechnia.

Very learned and clever, possessing some democratic notions (of a shari'yat democracy, of course), Uzun Haji strove towards an impossible goal: to turn the wheel of history backwards and to establish in the twentieth century a form of state pertaining to the era of Mohammed. . . .[30]

By 1918, imam Najmuddin of Hotso and sheikh Uzun Haji had at their disposal a small army of some 10,000 *murids* composed mainly of Naqshbandi adepts, which was the best fighting force in the North Caucasus. With these troops, Uzun Haji repulsed and finally defeated Denikin's White force during the offensive of the summer and autumn of 1919. In the autumn he proclaimed liberated Chechnia and northwestern Daghestan to be a "North Caucasian Emirate".

Uzun Haji died in May 1920. In the summer of that year, when the North Caucasus was occupied by the Bolsheviks, Najmuddin of Hotso with other Naqshbandi leaders — Mohamed of Balakhany, Dervish Mohammed of Andi, Ibrahim Haji of Kuchri, Seyyid Amin of Ansalta, Sirajuddin Haji of Avaristan — led the great revolt of Daghestan-Chechnia against Bolshevik rule. The resistance lasted over a year. Nominally the revolt was headed by Said beg, Shamil's grandson, and Colonel Kaitmas Alikhanov, but its real leaders were Naqshbandi sheikhs. Mohammed of Balakhany was commander-in-chief of the insurgent army at the battle of the Arakan Valley, where an entire Red Army brigade was wiped out and one of its commanders, Safar Dudarov, head of the Daghestani Cheka, was taken prisoner and executed on the spot. The revolt was finally quelled in September 1925, when the Bolsheviks captured imam Najmuddin and the two surviving Naqshbandi leaders, the sheikh Amin of Ansalta and Wahhab Astemirov.

The Daghestani-Chechen revolt was a widespread popular mass movement, resembling a peasant war, but the guerrilla fighters displayed an efficiency that only a brotherhood leadership comparable

30. Ibid., pp. 64-5.

to that of Shamil's fighters, with their spirit of total dedication and iron will, could ensure. For a whole year the mountaineers effectively opposed the Soviet Army, which had conquered Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia in a few short weeks.

It is highly instructive to compare the rapidity, the decisiveness and the efficiency with which the Sufi brotherhoods, particularly the Naqshbandiya, faced the Bolshevik Revolution and declared holy war against the new godless regime, with other Muslim weaknesses: the lack of decision and the political errors of the numerous Muslim liberal, moderate and left-wing parties of that time. While the Sufis fought, the others tried in vain to manoeuvre between the Bolsheviks and the White counter-revolutionaries. In the end they failed and collapsed; the majority were forced to emigrate or to join the winning side — the Bolsheviks. In contrast, the Sufis never hesitated: they fought back and their desperate resistance, seemingly hopeless from the purely human standpoint, had a decisive impact on the history of the entire Muslim world. For it must be remembered that in 1920, when the revolt was in full swing in the Caucasus and in Turkestan, the Soviet Government was seriously considering the possibility of an armed intervention in the Muslim Middle East. One Red Army division had already landed in Enzeli to help the Jengelis of Mirza Kuchik Khan in their march to Teheran — pro-Soviet elements were angling for political power in Khorassan and Tabriz — and one may speculate that the popular revolts within Soviet borders (in the North Caucasus and Central Asia) influenced the decision of the Bolshevik leaders to give up aggressive intervention and to adopt a more cautious policy in Iran and Turkey. Similarly, the revolt in Chechnia in 1943 may have exerted the same moderating effect on the Russian policy of intervention in Iranian Azerbaijan and Kurdistan.

The situation in the North Caucasus after the liquidation of the 1920 revolt was similar to that which followed Shamil's defeat: in both cases military disaster did not lead to the decline of the Sufi orders. On the contrary, while the Naqshbandiya was engaged in *jihad*, the Qadiriya's influence was growing fast. Noted Samurski in 1925:

> Recently muridism has been expanding in Daghestan. The Sufi adepts claim to be "communists" and it is not entirely without grounds that they call themselves "communists". Their doctrine certainly has some communist

characteristics, but they are those of a primitive, religious, ascetic communism comparable to that of the early Christian communities.[31]

According to Soviet official sources, in the mid-1920s in Daghestan there were still only 61,200 *murids*, nineteen *murshids* and sixty *vekils* (as against only 6,000 members of the Communist Party). In 1926, in Chechnia there were 60,000 Sufi adepts, mostly Qadiris, from a total Chechen population of 400,000.[32]

The Qadiris of Chechnia, whose participation in the 1920-1 rebellion was not on a large scale, became more influential in 1922-3. Sheikh Ali Mitaev, son of the founder of Bammat Giray Haji *wird* (which at the time numbered some 10,000 adepts), was one of the directing members of the Chechen Revolutionary Committee (*Revkom*). According to the Soviet sources, many members of the Chechen Communist Party were "zikrists" during this period, and several communist leaders, including T. Elderrkhanov, president of the Chechen Central Executive Committee, and his two deputy chairmen, Hamzatov and Sheripov, did not hide their sympathy for the brotherhood. Naturally enough, such a situation born out of Civil War anarchy could not last. Late in 1923, an antireligious campaign was launched in the North Caucasus. All the Shari'yat courts were abolished. During the winter of 1923-4, the Red Army disarmed the Chechen population and liquidated the "bandits' nests" (groups of the Naqshbandi guerrilla fighters in the high mountains and the underground Qadiri). In April 1924, sheikh Ali Mitaev was arrested as a "counter-revolutionary", "saboteur" and "clerical bourgeois nationalist". In 1925, Najmuddin of Hotso and two other Naqshbandi leaders were captured in the mountains and executed. The following year the local Communist Parties were purged of "unreliable elements". Elderkhanov was arrested and shot with many leading Chechen and Daghestani communists. In 1927, 'Ali Mitaev was tried in Rostov and executed. The year 1928 marked the beginning of the massive collectivisation in the Caucasus and coincided with the intense campaign to liquidate the "clerical leadership" and their sympathisers. Sheikh Solsa Haji Yandarov of Urus Martan in Chechnia, *murshid* of

31. Ibid., p. 131.
32. M.Z. Magomedov, "Iz istorii reshenii natsional'nogo i religioznogo voprosov na Severnom Kavkaza", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 14, 1973, p. 47.

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the Chechen branch of the Naqshbandiya, was tried in 1928 for "economic sabotage" and executed the following year. The same year another Naqshbandi *murshid*, sheikh Ali of Akusha in Central Daghestan, who opposed in 1918-20 the more adventurous Najmuddin of Hotso and adopted a neutral position towards the Bolsheviks, was arrested (and probably executed) with a number of his *murids*.

That first massive purge of Sufi adepts provoked a new wave of rebellions. This time the Naqshbandiya and different branches of the Kunta Haji fought side by side. The revolt started in the autumn of 1929 in the Chechen territory. Among the leaders we find both Kunta Haji *murids* and a Naqshbandi leader, Shita Istamulov, former Minister of War of Uzun Haji's Emirate. A few months later, the movement switched to northern Daghestan where it was led by the Naqshbandi sheikh Arsanukay Khidirlezov ("sheikh Amay") from Germenchik in the district of Hasav Yurt.

The fighting went on until the spring of 1930. In spite of the intervention of a Red Army division, it ended in compromise: an armistice, followed by a general amnesty. However, this did not bring peace to the country. Soviet authorities made use of the armistice to annihilate the "nationalist-clerical" elements, and the brotherhoods fought back. In the summer, the Russian chief of the Ingush secret police (GPU), responsible for the purges, was killed by a Kunta Haji *murid*. After that another adept of Kunta Haji killed the GPU chief for Chechnia (also a Russian). In 1931, the authorities responded by executing all the leaders of the 1930 rebellion and by arresting, trying and executing many of the adepts.

In 1936 the revolt was quelled. Among the leaders arrested or killed was the Naqshbandi sheikh Arsanukay Khidirlezov. According to Soviet sources, in the Ingush country where the leadership of the revolt was taken by the Batal Haji brotherhood, nine sons and seven grandsons of Batal Haji Belhroev, the founder of the order, were killed during the struggle, which lasted almost to the outbreak of the Second World War.

What were the aims, the expectations and the political goals pursued throughout this fifteen-year long struggle? Soviet sources tell us that Sufi leaders and adepts were "reactionaries", "counter-revolutionaries", "defenders of the clerical-feudal system", "bourgeois-nationalists", and so forth. They were also accused of being "agents" of various foreign imperialisms: mainly Turkish,

British and, after 1933, Japanese and German. It is more likely that the brotherhoods were fighting without any precise goal in mind, except to expel the Russians — simply because they could not submit to the new Soviet regime with its old Russian character and its new militant atheism. Of course it is hardly possible to claim that the brotherhoods were the only enemies that the Soviet government had to reckon with in the Caucasus between the wars. For example, Daghestani and Chechen Communist parties were purged of various "enemies" several times in those years. Many leading North Caucasian Bolsheviks, among them Najmuddin Samurski, were executed for "nationalism". Some of the mountain resistance groups were organised by non-religious leaders. Nevertheless, it is certain that at the time, just like in the nineteenth century and later during the Second World War, only Sufi brotherhoods could supply an organised, disciplined and efficient fighting force to oppose the Soviet regime.

Because of the prestige enjoyed by Sufi orders and of the influence they exercised on the population, the northeastern Caucasus remained an insecure area until the outbreak of war in 1941. In the winter of 1940, a major new revolt broke out in Chechnia. This time it had a non-religious leader, Hasan Israilov, a former journalist, and a member of the Communist Party. In February 1942, when German troops were still 1,000 miles from Chechnia, another rebellion broke out, also led by a former Communist Party member, Mairbek Sharipov. The Germans never reached the Chechen border, and the rebellion was crushed by the Red Army. On 23 February 1944, the entire Chechen and Ingush populations were rounded up and deported en masse to Siberia and Kazakhstan. Abdurrahman Avtorkhanov does not mention the Sufi brotherhoods in his detailed description of the 1940-3 troubles in Chechnia,[33] but recent Soviet sources reveal that three years later, after the deportation of the Chechen and Ingush population, guerrilla fighting was still going on in the higher mountains of Chechnia, Ingushetia and eastern Ossetia. The guerrilla movement's leader was the sheikh Qureish Belhoroev, the last son of the founder of the Batal Haji *tariqat*. He was captured only in 1947 by Soviet troops and condemned to ten years imprisonment. He was released in 1957 and returned to Chechnia where he again assumed the leadership of his brotherhood.[34]

33. Abdurrahman Avtorkhanov (Uralov), *Narodoubiistvo USSR — Ubiistvo Chechensogo Naroda* (Munich, 1952).
34. Kh.M. Mamleev, *Reaktsionnaia sushchnost' muridizma* (Groznyi, 1966), pp. 24-8;

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Most Soviet specialists of anti-Islamic propaganda recognise that the attempted genocide through deportation of over a million North Caucasian Muslims had a striking, unforeseen result: far from destroying the Sufi brotherhoods, the deportation actually promoted their expansion. For the deported mountaineers the Sufi orders became a symbol of their nationhood in the lands to which they were exiled. Moreover, these orders proved to be efficient organisers, thus to ensure the community's survival.

> During the war and because of the special post-war conditions, religious beliefs were restored to life by the leaders of the *murid* communities. The tribulations of the war and of the cult of personality, the brutal violation of Leninist national policy as regards the Chechen and the Ingush, explain this resurrection . . .[35]

When after Stalin's death the surviving North Caucasians were rehabilitated and permitted to return to their homeland, they left behind them in Central Asia well-organised Sufi groups, especially Qadiriya. Central Asian Soviet sources reveal that Sufism expanded during the 1960s and 1970s among the Kazakhs, the Uzbeks and the Karakalpaks. During the deportation years in Kazakhstan, new Sufi groups appeared among the Chechens, the most popular being the Vis Haji group.

In the late 1950s, Sufi brotherhoods in the Caucasus were once more subjected to systematic, relentless persecution about which the Soviet press itself provides abundant information. Members of Sufi brotherhoods were hunted as "criminals" and no longer simply as "reactionaries" or "dissidents". They were, and are, accused of immutable hostility towards the Soviet regime, and of economic sabotage, "banditism", "terrorism" and "armed rebellion". Soviet sociologists classify them as "extreme fanatics" and "hardened adversaries of the Soviet regime".[36]

They are distinguished by their blind, unlimited and unreasoning faith in

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and A.M. Tutaev, *Reakstsionnaia sekta Batal Haji* (Groznyi, 1968), pp. 8-9.

35. L.I. Klimovich, "Bor'ba Ortodoksov", *op. cit.*, p. 85.
36. Iv.V. Krianev, "Tipologiia religioznykh ob'edinenii i differentsiatsia ateisticheskogo vospitaniia", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 3, 1967, p. 54. Some Soviet experts advise treating them as "criminals" (*prestupniki*) and not simply as "dissidents". Cf. *Sovetskaia iustitsiia*, no. 22. 1962, pp. 23-4 and no. 10, 1964, pp. 12-4.

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God; they actively propagate their religious beliefs and cannot endure those who do not share them. They endeavour to force their religion upon their relatives, their friends, and their children and isolate themselves from the social and cultural collective life.[37]

The local Caucasian press provides rich material on the numerous trials of Sufi sheikhs and their *murids*, especially those belonging to the Naqshbandiya and to the Batal Haji *wird*. The most important trials took place in 1958, 1963 and 1964 in Makhach-Qala, Groznyi and Nazran. As a rule, the accused were tried for "banditism" and "manslaughter". The penalty was death.

Soviet sources testify that repression was and still is unable to stop the expansion of the Sufi organisations which appear today more powerful and influential than before the War, probably even than before 1917. V.G. Pivovarov, a leading Soviet socioligist, wrote in 1975: "More than half of the Muslim believers of the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Republic are members of a *murid* brotherhood."[38]

Sufi brotherhoods in Central Asia. Turkestan, the territory located south of the Syr Darya river, has been since the ninth century, and still is today, a borderland of the world of Islam (*Dar ul-Islam*), facing a hostile world of infidel barbarians: heathen, Buddhist or Christian Mongols, Chinese, Oirots and Kalmyks, and finally Russians — Christian or Marxist. Sufi brotherhoods played a major role in the history of the area by protecting Islam against the onslaught of the infidels and by conducting missionary work among the same infidels. Thanks to the Sufis' activity, Islam became deeply rooted among the northern sedentary Turks, Tatars and Bashkirs and among the nomadic Kazakhs and Kirghiz. We can say without exaggeration that from the twelfth century the history of Central Asia has been strongly influenced by the activity of the Sufi brotherhoods.

From the seventeenth century on, Turkestan, isolated from the rest of the *Dar ul-Islam* by Russia and by Shia Iran, underwent a 'long period of decline in all fields, including the religious. In the eighteenth century, before the arrival of Russians, no external danger threatened Islam, so that the Sufi brotherhoods lost their main *raison d'être* and followed the general decline. When the Russians invaded Turkestan,

37. V.G. Pivovarov, *Na etapakh sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia* (Groznyi, 1947), p. 35.
38. V.G. Pivovarov, "Sotsiologicheskoe issledovanie", op. cit., p. 316.

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there was no charismatic leader of Shamil's stature, no rigorous orthodoxy comparable to the Shari'yat movement of the Caucasian Naqshbandis, no *jihad* spirit; consequently the Russian conquest of Central Asia was rapid and relatively easy.

One of the main differences between Caucasian and Turkestani Sufism can be traced to this process. In Central Asia, Russian occupation did not directly threaten the life of the native community, and the resistance to the conquerors took a variety of forms ranging from the Emir of Bukhara and the most conservative religious elements, on the one hand, to the most radical *jadid* modernists on the other. In the Caucasus, by contrast, the Sufi holy war entirely absorbed national-liberation movements from the time of sheikh Mansur to the 1920 uprising.

However, the few armed attempts in Turkestan to shake Russian rule were without exception conducted by the Naqshbandis, from the uprising of the Chirchik valley in 1872 led by Hoja Ishan of Kulkara, to the defence of Gök-Tepe by the Turkmen Akhal-Tekke tribesmen in 1879 and 1881, which were led by the Naqshbandi sheikh Kurban Murat (whose tomb, or *mazar* at Dinli Qal'a is today one of the most venerated holy places of Turkmenistan),[39] and the revolt of Andizhan in 1898 led by Mohammed-Ali, *ishan* of Mintübe, known in Russian sources as "Madali Ishan".

At the time of the Russian conquest, four brotherhoods were still active in Turkestan, three of them autochthonous and one "imported":

— The *Naqshbandiya*, founded in Bukhara in the fourteenth century. The tomb of the founder Bahautdin Naqshband near Bukhara, though transformed into an anti-religious museum,[40] is still used as a place of pilgrimage by believers. The Naqshbandiya is the most prestigious among all the Turkestani *tariqa*. Its adepts played a central role during the Timurid and Shaybanid empires and once again in the defence of Turkestan againt the Buddhist invasions of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries. As noted earlier, nearly all the great poets of Turkestan were

39. M Annapesov and S. Saparov, "Podlinnoe litso ishana — Pravda o sviatykh mestakh", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 5 January 1982; a violent attack against the "fanatics" who organise pilgrimages to the tomb of Kurban Murat at Dinli Qala; also K. Ovezov, "Vliianie religioznykh organizatsii dukhovenstva i aktivnykh veruiushchikh na sokhranenie religioznykh perezhitkov", *Religioznye perezhitki i puti ikh preodolenii v Turkmenistane* (Ashkhabad, 1977), p. 72.
40. T.S. Saidbaev. *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1978), p. 210.

Naqshbandis: Ali Shir Nava'i, Abdurrahman Jami, Mahtum Quli, and Zelili inter alia.

— The *Kubrawiya*, founded in the twelfth century in the Khorezm. The tomb of the founder, Najmuddin Kubra, is still one of the most popular places of pilgrimage of Central Asia.[41] The Kubrawiya played an important part in the islamisation of the nomadic tribes of the Golden Horde. Today it is the least influential of Central Asian brotherhoods.

— The *Yasawiya*, another indigenous order founded in the twelfth century in the northern part of the Mavarannahr. The tomb of the founder, the poet Ahmed Yasawi, in the city of Turkistan is an important place of pilgrimage. The Yasawiya also played a crucial role in the Islamisation of the nomadic tribes; it declined after the founding of the Naqshbandiya and became marginal; it was re-activated in the twentieth century under Russian and Soviet rule. Today an offshoot of the Yasawiya, the so-called *tariqat* of the "Hairy Ishans", is one of the most dynamic and the most radical brotherhoods in Central Asia.

— The *Qadiriya*, an old *tariqat*, founded in the twelfth century in Baghdad. It was introduced into Central Asia in the Middle Ages, and once again after the Second World War, to Kazakhstan and Kirghizia by the deported Chechens and Ingush. The most radical branch of the North Caucasian Qadiriya, the tariqa of *Vis Haji* was founded in the 1950s, and the adepts of this brotherhood remained in Central Asia.

The political activity of Central Asian brotherhoods appears very different from the traditional holy war character of the North Caucasian brotherhoods. Curiously enough the Central Asian Bolsheviks, who were probably better informed of the situation of the brotherhoods than their Caucasian comrades, were the first to try with some success to use the dynamism of some radical Sufi groups for their own advantage. In two areas, in Kazan in the Middle Volga and in the eastern part of the Ferghana valley, two dissident, almost heretical Sufi groups recognised Bolshevik rule and even fought on the side of the Red Army against their co-religionists. These were the God's Regiment of Vaisov (see below), an offshoot of the Naqshbandiya in Kazan, and the order of the Laachi, a dissident group of the Yasawiya in southern Kirghizia.

41. T. Boyarov, "Sovremennoe sostoianie religioznosti sel'skogo naseleniia i degradatsiia religioznosti verovanii (na materialakh Kunia-Urgenchskogo raiiona)", *Religioznye perezhitki i puti ikh preodoleniia v Turkemnistane,* op. cit., p. 181.

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The best description of the order of the Laachi is given by S. Mambetaliev in his *Perezhitki nekotorykh Musul'manskikh techenii v Kirghizii i ikh istoria* (Frunze, 1969, pp. 30-9 and 39-41). The Laachi order was founded about the 1870s by a Yasawi sheikh, Sanivar, who was hanged by the Khan of Kokand as a heretic. His sect was declared immoral by the religious authorities of the Khanate, and the adepts went underground. After the Russian conquest, the sect surfaced under the leadership of another Yasawi sheikh, Babajan-Khalfa Rahmanqulov, a Kirghiz from Margelan who emigrated to the eastern Ferghana and propagated his creed among the Kirghiz clan of Zhookesek of Boston *uezd* (present-day Frunze district of the Osh region). We know next to nothing about this early stage in the history of the Laachi except that they avoided all contact with other Muslims. Their loud *zikr* was held at night in the presence of women, with singing of Ahmet Yasawi's *Hikmet* and ecstatic dances. Religious authorities persecuted the sectarians, declaring them "immoral", "impure" and accusing them of sexual orgies. They also tried in vain to denounce them to the Russian administration. On the eve of the 1917 Revolution, in spite of the persecution, the Laachi formed an important, though clandestine, group in the Ferghana valley, living in closed communities on the territory of Margelan and Kokan *uezds*.

The Laachi welcomed the October Revolution, taking advantage of the decree on religious freedom, and reappeared once again in the open. But co-operation between the dissident puritan Sufi sect and the new Bolshevik regime could not last for basic reasons, which Mambetaliev points out: "It was difficult to reconcile Karl Marx with the *Hikmet* of Ahmed Yasawi."[42] In the same way, after a short period of co-operation with the Soviets of Kazan in the 1920s, the Vaisis sectarians were physically liquidated during Stalin's purges in the early 1930s.[43] As for the Laachi, they went underground once more in the late 1920s. Only in the 1950s was the sect rediscovered. Today, according to the same Mambetaliev, they live in some all-Laachi villages (Say, Rabat, Gaz, Kshtut, Rant-Kant, Sogmet in the Batkent district, Sur, Ormosh, Syrt, Yar-Kutan, Kysyk in the Frunze district of the Osh region). The adepts are mainly Kirghiz. The sect represents a totally closed community protected by a rigorous endogamy and is

42. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki nekpotorykh Musul'manskikh techenii v Kirghizii i ikh istoriia* (Frunze, 1969), p. 39.
43. Z.A. Ishmuhammedov, *Sotsial'naiia rol' i evoliutsiia Islama v Tatarii (Kazan, 1979)*; classifies the Vaisis among the "enemies" of the Soviet regime.

still feared and despised by other Muslims.

With these two exceptions, Central Asian and Volga brotherhoods participated actively in the struggle against Soviet rule. Many Sufis were active in the Basmachi movement. Several *kurbashis* of the Ferghana valley were Yasawi sheikhs, including Islam Kurbashi, Abdul-Aziz Maksum, Molla Dehqan, and Khal-Hoja. It also seems that two of the most famous Basmachi leaders, Köshirmat and Junayd-Khan, were Naqshbandis.[44] This active participation in the national liberation war (which was not exactly a ''religious war'') explains the politicisation of Turkestani Sufism under the Soviet regime. By another curious paradox, it was the order which was the most mystical and least involved in worldly affairs of all Central Asian brotherhoods, the old Yasawiya, that became the most deeply involved in politics. In the early 1920s, a Yasawi *murshid*, Abumutalib Satybaldyev, who had fought with the Basmachis, formed somewhere in the Ferghana valley a radical clandestine group called in Soviet sources ''the brotherhood of Hairy Ishans'' (in Kirghiz *Chachtuu Eshander*; in Russian *Volosatye Ishany*). At first the brotherhood was centred in the Osh region of the eastern Ferghana valley, in the districts of Leyelek and Batkent, and in the industrial centres of Qyzyl Qiya and Suluktu. The village of Chilgazy was the centre of the *tariqat*.

Mambetaliev, our main source on the history of this brotherhood, accuses the Hairy Ishans of ''criminal and terrorist activity, preparing an anti-Soviet uprising in Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Kirghizia co-ordinated with an armed intervention of Basmachis led by Körshirmat and Ibrahim Beg and the White bandits from abroad.''[45]

The clandestine brotherhood was ''unmasked'' in 1936. Thirty-two leaders, including their sheikh Satybaldyev, were arrested, tried as ''terrorists'', ''saboteurs'' and ''counter-revolutionaries'', and executed. The accounts of their trial, published in October and November 1935 by *Pravda Vostoka* of Tashkent, were reproduced by Mambetaliev.[46] Soviet sources believe that the brotherhood was crushed and liquidated, but in fact it simply went underground. In 1938 the chairman of the Union of Godless Militants, Emelian Yaroslavski, complained in *Antireligioznik* (Moscow) that the

44. S. Mambetaliev, *Sufizm zhana anyng Qyrghyzstandagy agymdary* (Frunze, 1972), pp. 45-54.
45. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit., p. 36.
46. S. Mambetaliev, *Sufizm*,op.cit., pp. 42-5.

"reactionary clerics are very active in Kirghizia . . . and we do not know their strategy."[31]

The Hairy Ishans became more secret, more conspiratorial and even more hostile to communism, and their groups became more active during the Second World War in Arslanbad, Jelalabad, Osh and the mountains of southern Kirghizia under the leadership of the new chief of the *tariqa*, the ishan Tursunbay Madaripov. They were "unmasked" again in 1952 and once again in 1959. Their leaders were arrested, some were condemned, and others, including Madaripov, declared solemnly that they would break away from the brotherhood, but Mambetaliev doubts the sincerity of this apostasy: "Sufis practice *taqiya* when under threat of being condemned. . . ."[32] *Taqiya* may be defined as one's religious right, even duty, to lie if his life is threatened.

Today Hairy Ishans seem to be active again in southern Kirghizia and in some cities of Uzbekistan. The majority of adepts are Kirghiz with a minority of Uzbeks and Tajiks. Their brotherhood can be compared to an authentic secret society which has avoided infiltration by Soviet police; on the other hand, they have themselves managed to infiltrate Soviet and Communist Party organisations.[33] The sect of Hairy Ishans (whose activity may be compared to that of the Batal Haji and Vis Haji groups in the North Caucasus) is certainly the most openly anti-Soviet of all Turkestani brotherhoods. Moreover, it seems to represent a new phenomenon: a mystical Sufi brotherhood influenced, at least partly, by the example of a political party (the Communist Party, in their case) and which has adopted methods of propaganda and political mobilisation modelled on their adversaries.

Sufi brotherhoods in the Middle Volga region. We know of no monograph published specifically on the history of Sufism in the Middle Volga. We do know, however, that even before the Mongol conquest in the thirteenth century, Sufism had penetrated into the Bulgar kingdom. It

47. op. cit., 1938, nos. 8-9, p. 24.
48. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit., p. 39.
49. S. Mambetaliev, *Sufizm*, op. cit., pp. 43-54, gives a detailed history of the sect under the Soviet regime with an account of several trials. On page 49, the author records the response of a "Hairy Ishan" who is asked how he can reconcile being a Sufi and a member of the Komsomol: "I am a Komsomol in this world, a *murid* in the other" (*Menin Komsomolets Bolgonum bul dunyo uchun, murid bolgonum tigil dunyo uchun*).

was brought either by the Bulgar *hajis* or by Arab merchants from Baghdad. According to Zarif Husein oglu in his *Tavarihi Bulgaria*,[50] during the reign of the Khans Yadigar and Adil-Shah there were in the Bulgar kingdom more than one hundred Sufi sheikhs and theologians. It seems that these first Volga Sufis were Qadiris.

The second period of expansion of Sufism among the Volga Tatars corresponds to the period of the Golden Horde in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. At this time, Sufism was brought by the disciples of Ahmed Yasawi, especially by Suleyman Bakirgan,[51] who were either Turkestani missionaries or Volga Tatars who travelled to Turkestan to receive investiture from local *murshids*.

The third wave of Sufi expansion, which began in the fifteenth century, was due to Naqshbandi missionaries from Bukhara. The Naqshbandiya absorbed all pre-existing Sufi *tariqa* in the Volga territory. Tatar historians note that until the appearance of *jadidism* in the late nineteenth century Tatar literature was deeply marked by Sufi (Yasawi and Naqshbandi) mysticism. Such was the case of the first Tatar poems, *Yusuf and Zuleikha* (early thirteenth century), *Nur-u Sydur* in 1542, *Tahfa Mardan* in 1439, and the compilation of pious advice by Mahmud Ali Bulgari, *Najel Faradis*, in 1358. The Naqshbandis dominated Tatar literature after the Russian conquest and played a major role in the intellectual revival which began in the sixteenth century. All major Tatar writers of the post-conquest period were Naqshbandis: Mawla Qalyi (seventeenth century), Abdul Manih Qargaly (1782-1826), Abdurrahman Utyz Imani al-Bulgari (1754-1815), Ibadullah Salih (1794-1867) and Shamsutdin Zeki Sufi (1825-65), among others.[52]

The last stage of Sufi expansion started in the middle of the

50. Published in Kazan in 1883, pp. 32-3, quoted by Z.A. Ishmuhammedov, *Sotsial'naia rol' i evoliutsiia Islama v Tatarii* (Kazan, 1979), p. 50. Zarif Husein oglu refers to a medieval Tatar writer, Shamsuddin Akhun. See also Azade-Ayse Rorlich, "Sufism in Tatarstan: Deep Roots and New Concerns", *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 2, no. 4, Dec. 1983, pp. 37-44.
51. The poems (*Hikmet*) of Ahmed Yasawi and the "Book of Bakirgan" (*Bakirgan Kitaby*) were among the most popular books of piety before the Revolution.
52. See 'Ali Rahim and Aziz 'Ubaydullin (Gubaydullin), *Tatar edebiyaty tarihi boryngu daver*, (Kazan, 1924; in Tatar); Jemaleddin Validi (Validov), *Ocherki obrazovannosti i literatury Tatar do Revoliutsii 1917 goda* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1923); M. Aynullin (Gaynullin), *Tatar edebiyaty 19 yöz*, (Kazan, 1968); Abdurrahman Saadi, *Tatar edebiyaty tarihi* (Kazan, 1926); and the recent and remarkably objective Ya.G. Abdullin, *Tatarskaia prosvetitel'naia mysl,* (Kazan, 1976).

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nineteenth century and corresponds to the beginning of the great Tatar reforminst *jadid* movement and to the reign of the Tatar merchant bourgeoisie. During this period, Tatar Naqshbandis looked for guidance not only in Central Asia but also in Istanbul, Cairo, Mecca and Medina.

Nearly all of the first Tatar "enlighteners" (*prosvetiteli*) belonged to the Naqshbandi *tariqat* including those whom Soviet historians try to present as anti-clerical free-thinkers: for instance, Abu Nasr al-Kursavi (1783-1814), considered as the father of Tatar *jadidism*, who was initiated in Bukhara by a Naqshbandi Turkmen sheikh; Niyazi Quli Ishan;[53] Shihabeddin Marjani (1818-99), the greatest among Tatar *jadids*, was a Naqshbandi *murshid*, as were the majority of his disciples and followers. Of the Naqshbandi modernist theologians, it is necessary to mention the Sheikh Zaynullah Rasuli(ev) (1833-1917),[54] who was initiated in Istanbul in 1869 by the Sheikh Ziautdin Khemshahnavi. Zaynullah Rasuli enjoyed immense prestige among conservatives (*qadymists*) as well as among the modernists (*jadids*) and played a major role in the Tatar reformist movement. His reformed medresseh, the "Rasuliyeh" of Troitsk, was one of the main centers of *jadidism* in Russia. Among his Naqshbandi disciples were such outstanding personalities as the sheikhs 'Alimjan (Galimjan) Barudi, historian and pedagogue (1857-1921), co-founder in 1905 of the great Muslim party *Ittifaq al-Muslimin* and director of the *jadid* medresseh Muhammadiyeh of Kazan, and mufti of Orenburg in 1920-1; Sabirjan al-Hasani, *qadi* at the Muslim Spiritual Board of Orenburg; and Abdurrahman Rasuli, son of the Sheikh Zaynullah Rasuli, who in 1943 signed a concordat with Stalin normalising relations between the Soviet Government and the official Soviet Islamic establishment, and who became in 1943 the first post-war mufti of Ufa.[55] Another disciple of Rasuli was Rizaeddin Fehreddin oglu (1859-1935), theologian and

53. Sheikh Abdulgani Abdullaev, "Abu Nasr Kursavi", *Muslims of the Soviet East*, 1980-2, p. 7.
54. His biography in Rizaeddin Fahreddin oglu, *Sheikh Zaynullah Hazretneng tarjeman hale* (Kazan, 1917). His obituary was published by V.V. Barthold, "Sheikh Zaynullah Rasulev, 1883-1917", *Musul'manskii mir* (Petrograd, 1917), no. 1, pp. 73-4; see also L.I. Klimovich, *Islam v Tsarskoi Rossii* (Moscow, 1936), p. 169.
55. The second son of Zaynullah Rasnulev, Qadir Rasulev, graduated from an Istanbul *madrassah* and became an anti-religious *agitpropshchik*, cf. Z.A. Ishmuhammedov, op. cit., p. 58.

historian, *qadi* at the Spiritual Board of Orenburg, mufti and Chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Board for European Russia and Siberia between 1922 and 1935 (when he died in a Soviet prison), whom Jemaleddin Validov calls one of the greatest scholars of the contemporary Muslim world.[56]

It is significant that before the 1917 Revolution the Naqshbandis, while playing a major role in the *jadid* movement, were also active in the camp of their *qadymist* adversaries. Several "anti-*ishan*" pamphlets directed against the *qadymists* were published in Kazan before the Revolution[57] and during the Soviet period[58] by Naqshbandi *jadids*.

Around 1862 a Naqshbandi sheikh, Bahautdin Vaisov (Vaisi), founded in Kazan a curious dissident branch called the God's Regiment of Vaisov (*Vaisov Bozhii Polk*) representing a strange blending of socialism, Tolstoyism and Wahhabi-type puritanism. The Vaisis categorically rejected infidel rule and condemned those Muslims who accepted it. The son of the founder, Inan Vaisov, sided with the Bolsheviks during the Revolution and was killed in battle by his former co-religionists in February 1918. The schismatic *tariqat* survived during some years of the Soviet regime, then disappeared.[59]

From the Second World War, we have no information on the activity of the Naqshbandis in the Tatar region, nor do we know if the brotherhood is still alive in this territory. The approved Soviet Islamic establishment there is relatively influential, more so in the Middle Volga than in many other Muslim areas of the Soviet Union. Under these conditions Sufi Islam cannot play the role of the foremost preserver of religious tradition. However, a Tatar author, A. Kalaganov, recently mentioned "vagabond Muslim preachers

56. *Ocherki*, op. cit., p. 70. His biography in A. Battal-Taymas, *Rizaeddin Fahreddin oglu* (Istanbul, 1958).
57. In particular, Ishan Mohammed Haras Aydarov, *Ishannarga Kitap* (Kazan, 1911).
58. Among others, Zarif Muzaffari, *Ishannar-Dervishler* (Kazan, 1931), and Naji Dumavi, *Hazerge Tatar ruhanilary ham alarnyng eshlare* (Kazan, 1928). "Dumavi" is a pseudonym for Najib Sigbat oglu Tohtamysh (1883-1933), a former *mudarris* and probably a Naqshbandi adept who rallied to the new regime.
59. On this subject, Chantal Lemercier-Quelqujay, "Le Vaisisme à Kazan — Contribution à l' étude des Confréries Musulmanes chez les Tatars de la Volga", *Die Welt des Islams* (Leiden, 1959), vol. 6, nos. 1-2, pp. 91-113; E.V. Molostvova, "Vaisov Bozhii Polk", *Mir Islama* (St. Petersburg), no. 2, 1912, pp. 143-52, K. Katanov, *Novye dannye o Musul'manskoi sekte Vaisovtsev* (Kazan, 1909); for the Soviet period, M. Sagidullin, "K istorii Vaisovskogo dvizheniia", *Ocherki po izucheniiu mestnogo kraia* (Kazan, 1930), pp. 236-66.

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operating among rural population in violation of Soviet laws concerning religious cults''. The ''vagabond fanatics'' may well be Naqshbandi adepts.[60]

Sufi Islam and the official Soviet Islamic establishment

The state of relations between Sufi Islam and the official Soviet Islamic establishment are difficult to describe, if only because they would appear to be somewhat ambiguous. Several factors condition this relationship. First, both faces of Islamic practice are equally orthodox and, from the standpoint of Islamic theology, equally acceptable and legal. Secondly, Sufi Islam is pronouncedly hostile to Soviet power; the official Islamic establishment is loyal and submissive to it. Therefore, it is perfectly logical for Soviet authorities to support the latter while trying to destroy the former — in fact using official Islam as a weapon against the Sufis. Thirdly, because both official Islam and Sufism belong to the same political realm, which is hostile to all religions, they face the same materialist threat; in order to survive they need each other's help.

Even in the nineteenth century, Russian experts on Central Asia attempted to oppose the official Muslim *ulema* to the Sufi dervishes; the former became partners to the Russian administration and their loyalty was partly ensured, while the latter managed to escape all control from the Russian authorities, who considered them to be implacable enemies.[61] Soviet Islamologists inherited this belief, which is clearly expressed in L. Klimovich's article on the double face of Islam.[62]

Nevertheless, in the immediate post-war period the Soviet effort to employ the official Islamic establishment in this way was limited and cautious. In the beginning, only the Spiritual Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan responded favourably to Soviet pressure to assume the initiative; later it was joined by the Spiritual Board for the North Caucasus and Daghestan. To our knowledge, the other two Spiritual

60. A. Kalganov, ''Ideologiia esheneng mohin buini'', *Tatarstan Kommunisti* (Kazan) no. 1, 1983, p. 72, analysed by Rostam Sadri, ''Anti-Islamic propaganda in the Tatar ASSR'', *Radio-Liberty Research Bulletin,* 21 February 1983.
61. See, for example, E.T. Smirnov, *Dervishizm v Turkestane* (Tashkent, 1898), pp. 55-8; and *K voprosu o Musul'manskikh ishanakh* (Kazan, 1895).
62. L. Klimovich, ''Bor'ba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame'', *Voprosy nauchnogo Ateizma*, no. 2, 1966, p. 66 and passim.

Boards, in Ufa and in Baku, did not participate in the limited campaign against the Sufis.

The battle between the official Islamic establishment and parallel trends is seemingly joined over the issue of religious observances at unregistered holy places. In September 1958 Ziautdin Babakhanov, the mufti of Central Asia, published a *fetwa* in which he condemned pilgrimages to the "Throne of Suleyman" in the outskirts of Osh, the most venerated of all holy places in Central Asia. Several months later, in February 1959, he produced another *fetwa* in which he condemned the practice of pilgrimage to holy places generally [63] and then yet a third declaring "ishanism" to be a trend alien to Islam. In the 1960s, Haji Kurbanov, mufti of the North Caucasus and Daghestan, published a *fetwa* condemning prayers at holy places:

QUESTION: Does Shari'yat law permit meeting at a mazar to pray?
ANSWER: No, it does not. Our Prophet said that those people [who meet at a *mazar*] are sinners. He also said that during the pre-Islamic era of ignorance, when a man died, great honours were bestowed on him, a temple was built and people would pray at his image. This is paganism and those who practice it will have to answer on the Day of Judgment. The Prophet also said: "When I die, do not meet at my grave."
QUESTION: Is it allowed to ask a dead one for a healing?
ANSWER: No, this would be a sin, and moreover a useless one. The dead don't listen. In the Chapter "Aqab" of the Holy Quran it is written: "Outside God nobody can give help." The Prophet said: "With death everything is terminated. The dead cannot give help."
QUESTION: Is it proper for men and women to assemble at the tombs of the saints?
ANSWER: No, it is not proper. Such assemblies in cemeteries are in opposition to Islam. For women it is a great sin.[64]

More recently, in late 1980 and early 1981, mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov, delivered another *fetwa* on the subject of holy places in answer to a question of the *qadi* Abdullah Kalanov, representative of the Spiritual Board in Tajikistan. The full text of the *fetwa* is published in the official organ of the Board, *Muslims of the Soviet East*. This *fetwa*

63. We could not find the texts of these two *fetwas*, noted in T. Izimbetov, *Islam i sovremennost'* (Nukus, 1963), p. 98.
64. We have been unable to discover the exact dates of the *fetwas*. Their texts are reproduced by I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 3, 1967, pp. 173-4.

proclaims once again the "inadmissibility of pilgrimage to holy places, especially to such places whose Islamic character is dubious: Takht-i Suleyman ('Osh Piri') in Kirghizia and Shah-i Mardan in Uzbekistan". The *fetwa* continues:

> [These places] cannot be regarded as authentic, and Islam considers that paying homage to these graves is wrong. Under these circumstances our Religious Board has made an appeal to all Muslims to safeguard themselves against such malpractices. We would like to emphasise once more that, under the guidance of uneducated imams, certain persons continue to pay homage to different graves as well as to burial grounds and commit these acts, being quite confident that they are paying homage to the burial places of holy persons and that by doing so they are performing acts of some importance. We wish to give a reminder once more that this is tantamount to a pure act of idolatry and can only be looked upon as one of the gravest mortal sins of genuinely faithful Muslims . . . The Muslim Religious Board for Central Asia and Kazakhstan invites all *qadis* of our republics, the imams, the members of *mutawaliat* of the mosques, to explain to Muslims that paying homage to distant or neighbouring graves and burial grounds is considered as a grave mortal sin. . . . The Religious Board categorically forbids imam-khatibs to perform heathen rites and similar acts, which are considered to be grave mortal sin by the religion of Islam.[65]

The official Islamic establishment's campaign against the unofficial practice of pilgrimages to and worshipping at holy places would appear to have two implicit stimuli. In the first place, if one takes into account the sheer volume of academic and propagandistic studies devoted to the subject of holy places, none of which treats the subject favourably and which is constantly augmented by new condemnations in the daily press of the regions, it is impossible to conclude otherwise than that the Soviet government recognises in the holy place a phenomenon of a social and political nature that they would like to eliminate: that they represent an implicitly anti-Soviet activity that operates beyond Soviet institutional control. It is likely, therefore, that the *fetwas* against the practice of holy place worship are inspired first and foremost by Soviet non-secular authorities and for a political rather than a theological reason, namely subsequent justification by official clerics of the campaign against the holy places in Islamic doctrine. In short, the campaign against the holy places is waged in favour of handing back to the Soviets a measure of lost social control.

65. *Muslims of the Soviet East*, no. 2, 1981, pp. 18-19.

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Secondly, it is entirely possible that Soviet specialists have realised and have been able to pursuade the regime that any lessening of the official Islamic establishment's influence will not result in fewer Muslim believers but instead will end in a net gain for the Sufi brotherhoods, who will quickly fill the void.

A third reason for the campaign against holy places might be found in an examination of the inherent interests of the Soviet official Muslim establishment. Regardless of whether one views this establishment as a dupe of the Soviet government, or on the contrary a secret accomplice of Sufis and other parallel trends, or even as the willing and clever partner of both, it clearly is not in the official Islamic establishment's interests to allow the diffusion of popular support for Islam in general. Each holy place represents a focal point for Islamic faith that is not only directed away from those mechanisms by which the official Islamic authorities guide and control Islam in the Soviet Union, but moreover might be seen as being implicitly against them. Thus it is probable that the campaign against holy places is far more than the simple theological issue it would appear to be on the surface. Rather, it is a political issue of considerable import which all parties have an interest in resolving in their own favour.[66]

On whose side, therefore, does official Islam stand? Of course it is impossible for any outside analyst to decide whether the official Islamic establishment of the Soviet Union is simply another arm of the Soviet government, or rather something more subtle, more flexible, and more clever in its view of the future of Islam in the Soviet state: that is whether it sees itself as necessarily compromised by the political milieu in which it is forced to operate, but at the same time as a true defender of the faith and perhaps the ultimate authority around which Muslims in the Soviet regions must coalesce if Soviet power should falter. Indeed, there is unlikely to be an "establishment" view on this issue; in any group with individuals of different education and social

66. It is interesting to compare official Islam's interest in the problem of holy places, which were pronounced as theologically wrong in *fetwas*, with its interest in other important matters which the Soviet governmet does not like either, such as the issue of *zakat*. In another *fetwa* (late 1960s?), Shakirjan Khialetdinov, the mufti of Buynaksk and Chairman of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the North Caucasus, condemned the collection of *zakat* by the Caucasian brotherhoods: "Zakat is, in principle, intended for the poor; as there are no poor in our country, the *zakat* must not be given to lazy people, parasites, and malingerers, which would be contrary to Shari'yat law." See Mamleev, *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyi, 1970), p. 11.

background, despite their Islamic worldview, there is unlikely to be complete agreement on any issue. In the Soviet Islamic establishment — where some officials are uncompromising Muslims, others are (in no easily identifiable order) both devout Muslims and realistic politicians, and still others are Soviet agents pure and simple — it is certainly impossible for insiders and outsiders alike to say just what the official Islamic establishment stands for; they may not even know themselves.

It is useful, therefore, to examine the attitude of Soviet scholars on this issue. What difference do they see between the Soviet-approved clerics of the official Islamic establishment and the parallel trends in Islam, particularly the Sufis, who operate outside official Islam's control and often in contravention of the laws of the Soviet state? Curiously, not much. "We must not exaggerate the difference between the modernists [official clerics] and the conservatives [Sufis]," notes one specialist. "These differences exist only within the limits of Islam and have a purely scholastic character."[67] Or, "Official representatives of the Muslim clergy often spread their propaganda indirectly, through the channel of unofficial fanatics. Thus nobody can accuse them of violating Soviet legislation."[68] Others see an active conspiracy between the official and parallel trends in Islam. Notes one Soviet specialist: "Because of their ability to adjust themselves to the new conditions of the Soviet era, Muslim 'modernists' [clerics] are as dangerous as the conservatives."[69] A leading Soviet specialist has observed that it is difficult to weed out the bad clerics and to isolate them from the menacing Sufi trends for a very simple reason:

> Many leaders and members of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan are themselves ishans or descendants of famous ishans and still have many unofficial *murids*, though in a clandestine way. Therefore the condemnation of ishanism by the Spiritual Board is purely academic [*na slovakh*].[70]

In fact, this view is correct in many ways. For example, the first post-war mufti of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, Ishan Babakhan ibn

67. M.A. Abdullaev, "Za glubokoe kriticheskoe izuchenie ideologii Islama," in *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia* (Groznyi, 1972), p. 30.
68. M.A. Abdullaev and M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), p. 17.
69. T. Izimbetov, p. 78.
70. Ibid., p. 101.

Abdul Mejid Khan (1943-57) was a Naqshbandi *murshid*, as was his son Ziautdin Babakhanov, who was mufti from 1957 to 1982.[71] Ibrahim Hoja Ishan, the grandfather of the deputy mufti of Central Asia, the sheikh Abdulgani Abdullaev, was a Qadiri *murshid*, and his son and grandson were adepts of the same brotherhood.[72] If one assumes that these examples can be multiplied considerably, then it becomes somewhat clearer why the official Islamic establishment never attacks Sufism directly but only picks away at some of its less subtle aspects, such as the participation of women in Sufi rites and holy place observances generally. For their part the Sufis never — at least to our knowledge — attack the official Islamic establishment.

Official Islam — at least the clerics at the highest level of it — can probably be considered as something more than mere caretakers of Islam during the "Soviet period", which any thoughtful Muslim with a sense of his own history can consider only as another moment in history, certainly not the final one. In another sense, official Islam represents the last vestiges of the brilliant pre-revolutionary *jadid*, or Islamic modernist tradition, the influence of which was felt throughout the entire Muslim world. It represents a kind of intellectual "general staff" which, despite whatever unpleasant chores it is required to perform on behalf of secular Soviet power, has the ability to maintain the purity and integrity of the faith while reconciling Soviet dogma with Islam's progress. As such, official Islam has a critical role to play in the precarious ideological balance between liberal modernist trends and conservative fundamentalist ones, represented by the Sufi sheikhs. To date, neither trend appears to see an advantage in attacking, much less eliminating, the other, even if this were possible. Both have recognised, wisely, that at this moment in history their destinies cannot be foreseen and that therefore their paths should not at this time be separated.

71. Interview with the mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov in *Al-Arabi*, January 1980.
72. *Musulmans de l'Orient Soviétique*, no.4, 1975, p. 9.

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SUFI ADEPTS: NUMBERS, RECRUITMENT, WOMEN

In 1917, after the victory of a Marxist-Leninist movement, the "spearhead and vanguard of the proletariat", the Communist Party, imposed one compulsory ideology on the populations of the reconstructed Russian Empire: dialectical materialism (*diamat*). Nearly seven decades later, we can see the poor staying power of this ideology in the tentative but evident spiritual revivals taking place among certain Christians, Buddhists and Muslims. This is a widely generalised phenomenon which concerns a limited number of conscientious believers of diverse origins, including former atheists, belonging to various social levels, from lowest collective farmer to the highest factory manager: individuals who have become discouraged or disgusted by the hopeless spiritual and intellectual vulgarity of officially touted dialectical materialism. Rejecting this, they now try to find answers to their personal and collective problems in the spiritual traditions of their communities.

All official ecclesiastical administrations in the Soviet Union have accepted the concordat established during the Second World War with the Soviet regime. They now co-operate with the Soviet government to maintain the tenuous *status quo* between the Godless state — which is fighting for the creation of a "new Soviet man" who will be "liberated from religious fantasies" — and the churches, who seek to preserve a congregation of believers. All official churches are loyal to the regime. They continue to conduct a limited activity, which for the most part has been reduced to the observance of religious rites, but they are denied any right to proselytise or to attract new adepts: the churches may survive but not expand, which is to say that ultimately they will not be encouraged to survive either. Not surprisingly, the spiritual revival of the last twenty years is taking place outside the official churches, assuming the general character of individual quests. Among the Jews of the USSR, this search is symbolized by the renewed interest in Hassidic mysticism. Among Orthodox believers (Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, and Moldavians) the revival often

takes on an openly schismatic or even heretical colouring. Those believers who for some reason do not agree with the Patriarchate of Moscow or with its submissiveness to the communist regime have no other choice but to break away from the official church to join the numerous militant sectarian chapels of, for example, Jehovah's Witnesses, Baptist *Initsiativiniki*, Molokans, or the *Istinno-Pravoslavnye Khristiane*.

In the struggle for survival in the communist world Islam has a striking practical advantage in comparison to Christianity because it is a religion without a dominating clergy. Muslim believers do not require an intermediary between themselves and their Creator. A mufti is not a Muslim bishop, and his statements, including his *fetwas*, carry no compulsion. A Muslim believer who becomes dissatisfied with his mufti's pro-Soviet attitude or his submissiveness to the Soviet state may join a Sufi brotherhood without becoming either a heretic or a schismatic. He remains a perfectly orthodox Muslim within the mainstream of Islam.

For a better understanding of Sufism in the Soviet Union today, it is necessary to remind ourselves what Sufism is *not*, lest we commit errors common to both Western and Eastern scholars. The general mistake common to nearly all scholarly communities is to compare present-day Sufism with the early mystics of the eighth to the eleventh centuries. This comparison is unsuitable for many reasons; if a comparison must be made, it should be between the brotherhoods of today and the Sufi orders during the Mongol invasion of Central Asia in the thirteenth century. Present-day Sufism is not monachism, it does not reject the world, and it has no ascetic trends. French scholars like to compare today's Sufi orders in Central Asia to the *zawwiyya* of North and West Africa, emphasising their "maraboutic" character. British scholars are fond of looking for Hindo-Muslim syncretism in Central Asian Sufism, while the Turkish error lies in presenting Sufi brotherhoods as heterodox (Shi'a extremist) organisations comparable to the Bektashis. Pre-Revolutionary Russian scholars often emphasised the shamanist background of the Sufi orders. Post-revolutionary Soviet characterisations of the Sufi orders are typically bold, frequently amusing, and usually wrong. To most Soviet scholars, the orders represent clandestine surrogate political organisations whose adepts are foreign agents, spies, and saboteurs. More sober minds among them present the brotherhoods as heterodox sects, which of course is also wrong. Western Marxists, playing a variation on this theme, insist on

de-spiritualising Sufism and reducing it either to a simple social protest or to ritual magic. We can also speak of an "Iranocentric" view of Sufism among some scholars, which consists of reducing Sufism in Central Asia and the Caucasus to fundamentalism "*à la* Khomeini". Finally, although the study of Sufism has come only recently to the United States, some American scholars have already fallen into an unfortunate and atypically unimaginative error: they insist that Sufism in the Soviet Union has little significance because there is only limited data on it. In fact, evidence is plentiful and revealing.

Sufi brotherhoods are not secret societies comparable to Freemasonry, and nor do they represent, as Soviet sources insist, a "parallel Islam" in the sense that it constitutes a religious alternative. Nowhere does Sufism reject the Shari'yat, the law of Islam. Rather, Sufism is a deeper form of Islamic belief; a Sufi adept is not a "better Muslim", and he can never be a "different" Muslim, but he frequently is a more responsible and more fervent Muslim. He has chosen to deepen his knowledge of Islam by more rigorous study and to observe Islam's moral precepts through more rigid self-discipline. A Soviet Caucasian specialist, describing a Chechen Sufi group, writes with an exceptional comprehension of what makes a Sufi:

> The absolute majority of *murids* do not seek consolation through their association to a *tariqat*. Rather they wish to establish their election [*izbrannost*] and their superiority [*prevozkhodstvo*] compared to other less than complete [*nepolnotsennye*] believers, compared to those who have doubts concerning their own faith, and compared to unbelievers . . . For the *murid* the unbeliever is considered an immoral sinner who can not be considered a Chechen or an Ingush. . . .[1]

To this a more recent work, *Islam v SSSR* (Moscow, 1983, p. 83), adds: "Members of *murid* communities have a highly developed sense of élitism, of their superiority. They believe that they are accomplishing a vitally important task, being bearers of the true faith."

Sufi brotherhoods have no specific secret doctrine (or "ideology", as we might say today). Their Islamic belief remains orthodox and traditional. In Sufism one should never confuse structure and doctrine: the former may be more rigid and demand greater discipline from its

1. S. Umarov, "Muridizm s blizkogo rasstoianiia', op. cit., p. 31.

adepts, but the message is the same as in the Islamic practice of non-Sufis.

How many?

An appraisal of the number of adepts of Sufi brotherhoods is always hazardous. *Tariqa* do not draw up registers of their members. In the Soviet Union, where Sufi adepts are categorised at best as ''parasites'' and ''anti-social elements'' and at worst as ''criminal enemies of the socialist regime'', the assessment of the number of adepts is particularly difficult and calls for the utmost caution.

Nevertheless, we have some numerical data for the pre-Revolutionary period and for the first years of the Soviet regime. The figures at our disposal in this connection, based mainly on the archival documents of the Tsarist and Soviet police, are few but significant. Thus we know that on the eve of the 1917 Revolution, 60,000 *murids* existed in the Chechen-Ingush country.[2] The anti-Sufi persecutions that followed the victory of communism in the Chechen country had little influence on the proportion of Sufi adepts within the Muslim population of the northern Caucasus. In 1925 Najmuddin Samurski, First Secretary of the Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Daghestan, wrote with disguised sympathy for his opponents: ''Sufism is in full boom in Daghestan. The *murids* claim to be ''communists'' and it is certain that their doctrine possesses certain features of communism, although the characteristics in question are those pertaining to primitive, religious, ascetic communism, similar to primitive Christianity.''[3] At the beginning of 1926, according to M.A. Karataeva whose work is based on the Party archives of the Rostov region,[4] there were 70,000 *murids* in the Chechen-Ingush Republic, 60,000 of them Chechens (19 per cent of the population) and 10,000 Ingush (13 per cent of the population). In that year there were 200 *murids* in the Kabardo Balkar Republic (0.2 per cent of the population). Another Soviet author, A. Kh. Kasumov, who also

2. A.V. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (Stavropol, 1983), p. 62.
3. Najmuddin Samurski, *Dagestan* (Moscow-Leningrad, 1925), p. 131.
4. M.A. Karataeva, ''Reaksionnaia ideologia musul'manskogo dukhovenstva Checheno-Ingushetii i bor'ba s nei v 1920-1931 gg.'' (''Reactionary ideology of Muslim clergy of Chechen-Ingush country and struggle against it in the years 1920-1931''), *Sotsiologia, ateizm, religia — Izvestiia Checheno-Ingushskogo Issledovatel'nogo Instituta Istorii, Yazika i Literatury* (Groznyi, 1972), vol. I., fasc. 1, p. 92.

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makes use of the Party archives of the Rostov region, estimates that "in 1925, 70-80 per cent of Chechens and 30-35 per cent of Ingush over eighteen years of age were members of a *murid* order,"[5] which would correspond to a much higher figure than the one suggested by Karataeva.

It is estimated[6] that in 1927 there were thirty-eight *sheikhs* (chiefs of brotherhoods) in the Chechen-Ingush Republic. However, this figure is much too low and probably corresponds only to chiefs of *tariqa* known to the police. The real number of sheikhs must have been much higher, because at that time the Caucasian *tariqa* were operating almost entirely underground. According to another Soviet author, Kh. Oshaev, in 1930 there were in the Chechen-Ingush Republic 10,000 adepts of the Bammat Giray Khodja brotherhood alone,[7] which was completely clandestine at the time.

Soviet sources note for the neighbouring republic of Daghestan that at the end of the 1920s there were 61,200 *murids*, 19 *sheikhs* and 60 *vekils* for a total Muslim population of about 700,000.[8] Despite a particularly severe anti-Sufi repression in this republic, the adepts of *tariqas* in Daghestan at the time made up nearly 9 per cent of the population.

Nowadays, anti-religious propaganda often describes Caucasian *tariqas* as rapidly disappearing "survivals of the past". According to the assertions of this propaganda, only a few Sufi groups remain, and these are scattered in the most remote regions and consist of the least developed elements of the population. If we are to believe official Soviet propaganda, the last adepts are illiterate old villagers. This over-optimistic assertion is at variance with the conclusions of some better informed Soviet observers.

Thus L. Klimovitch, the leading light of anti-Muslim propaganda

5. A.Kh. Kasumov, "Iz istorii ateisticheskogo dvizheniia na Severnom Kavkaze (1917-1937)" ("Extract of the history of the atheistic movement in the Northern Caucasus, 1917-1937"). *Sotsiologia, ateizm, religiia*, op. cit., p. 72.
6. According to A.V. Avksent'ev, *op. cit.*, p. 62, quoting *Istoriko-ekonomicheskie Ocherki Checheno-Ingushkoi Avtonomnoi Oblasti*, (Historical-economic drafts of Autonomous Chechen Region) (Groznyi, 1930), p. 11.
7. Kh. Oshaev, "Muridizm v Chechne" ("Muridism in Chechnia"), *Revolutsiia i goretz*, no. 9, 1930, quoted by M.A. Karataeva, quoted article, p. 97.
8. M.Z. Magomedov, "Iz istorii reshenii natsional'nogo i religioznogo voprosov na Severnom Kavkaze" ("From the history of solutions to the national and religious questions in the Northern Caucasus"), *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, (Moscow, 1973), XIV, p. 47.

under Stalin and Khrushchev, wrote in 1966 on the subject of parallel Islam,

> There are two trends in present-day Islam: the ''mosque'' trend [*mechetskoe*] directed by the muftis, the sheikh ul-Islam and other representatives of the four Spiritual Directorates, and the ''out-of-mosque'' trend [*vnemechetskoe*], that of brotherhoods, Sufi-dervishes or *murids*, directed by *ishans*, *pirs* and *ustads*, the survivors of which mostly live far from cities in the auls and kishlaks. At present, the clergy of the ''out-of-mosque'' trend are everywhere much more numerous than that of the ''mosque'' trend. In certain regions, for instance in the northern Caucasus, practically all the members of the clergy belong to *murid* communities. . . .[9]

Since the Second World War not a single serious statistical study has been published in the Soviet Union giving even an approximate number of *tariqa* adepts. Such statistics — assuming that they exist — belong to the archives of the KGB and MVD and therefore represent top-secret state business. Nevertheless religious sociological investigations undertaken in the 1960s and 1970s by Soviet experts provide some indirect indications which, however insufficient and unreliable, still give some idea of the quantitative importance of the *tariqas*.

V.G. Pivovarov, in 1975, made the most interesting remark on the subject of the Muslim population of the Chechen-Ingush republic: ''In the Chechen-Ingush republic more than half the believers are adepts of *murid* brotherhoods.''[10] In 1979, the Muslim population of the republic consisted of 611,000 Chechens, 135,000 Ingush and 22,000 Daghestanis, totalling 768,000. According to a survey in 1973 made by the same V.G. Pivovarov,[11] 52.9 per cent of the Chechens and 43 per cent of the Ingush were believers (as against 11.9 per cent of Russians being Christian believers. Supposing that Pivovarov's remark applies only to people that Soviet sociologists classify under the

9. L. Klimovitch, ''Bor'ba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame'' (''Struggle of the orthodox and modernists in Islam'', *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma,* II, 1966, pp. 66-7.
10. V.G. Pivovarov, ''Problemy byta, natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR — Sotsiologicheskia issledovaniia'' (''Problems of way of life, national traditions and beliefs in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR — Sociological investigations''), *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, XVII, 1975, p. 316.
11. V.G. Pivovarov, *Na etapakh sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia* (''Stages of sociological investigation''), (Groznyi, 1974), pp. 158-9.

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heading of "believers by conviction" or "fanatics" and who, according to another survey made in 1981, constitute 39.3 per cent of all believers in the Chechen-Ingush country, the figures that we arrive at are as follows: the believers among the Chechens (if the proportion of 52.9 per cent remained more or less stable) amounted in 1979 to 320,000. Of this figure, 39 per cent — or 124,000 individuals — are to be classified as "fanatical believers", of whom a certain number (at least half) would be adepts of *tariqa*, so that there would be approximately 62,000 murids in the Chechen country.

In 1968, a Chechen anti-religious specialist, Hadjibekir Bokov,[12] included in the category of "fanatics" the chiefs of brotherhoods and some of their adepts, whereas other members of the *tariqa* were classified as only "moderate believers". If that were the case, the number of *murids* (fanatics and moderates) would be distinctly higher than 62,000. For the Ingush, the corresponding figures would be 58,000 believers (43 per cent of the total population), of whom 22,500 (39.3 per cent) would be fanatical believers with some 11,000 belonging to a Sufi brotherhood. The total number of *murids* in the Chechen-Ingush Republic would therefore be 84,500, to which should be added a certain number of Daghestanis living in the republic. We thus obtain the impressive figure of 85,000 *murids*, equivalent to about 11 per cent of the total Muslim population of the republic, as compared with 19 per cent in 1926 and 20 per cent before 1917. However, the real number of adepts is likely to be much higher. Here one should bear in mind the following. First, it is not in the interests of the Soviet experts to exaggerate the number of adepts of mystical brotherhoods, who ought logically to have disappeared long ago from the country of advanced socialism. And secondly, *tariqa* are considered to be enemies of the socialist regime, and their adepts are liable to prosecution as criminals. *Murids* have therefore adopted the practice of *taqiya*, and many of them remain out of reach of even the most objective investigations of Soviet research workers.

In 1979 a Chechen researcher, Vakha Gadaev, published a more precise report as the result of a collective survey of the level of religious beliefs in the rural environment of the Chechen country.[13] When investigating the religious attitude of rural youth, Gadaev noted that

12. Hadjibekir Hakatovich Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* ("Atheists on the attack"), (Gronznyi, 1968), p. 81.
13. V.Yu. Gadaev, "O kharaktere religioznosti sel'skoi molodzhi" ("Character of

50.9 per cent of the young believers were, according to their own declaration, members of a *wird*. According to the figures of the 1970 census, country-dwellers constituted 82 per cent of the Chechen community (there were about 411,093 such against a total population of 508,898 Chechens) and 69 per cent of the Ingush community (79,063 against a total population of 113,675 Ingush). Detailed figures from the 1979 census have not yet been published, but as the process of urbanisation in the North Caucasian republics is rather slow, we can accept that the percentage of country-dwellers at the time of Gadaev's survey was around 75 per cent for the Chechens (i.e. 458,000 individuals) and 60 per cent for the Ingush (81,000 individuals). The proportion of believers to non-believers is higher in rural than in urban areas. It is reasonable to put the proportion of believers among young Chechens at 30 per cent (137,000 believers) and among young Ingush at 20 per cent (16,000 believers). Given these figures, the number of young adepts of *tariqa* in the countryside would be 69,000 Chechens and 8,000 Ingush, a total of 77,000. This figure is slightly lower than that based on Pivovarov's statement, but it is still exceedingly high if we are to take into consideration the relentless efforts directed by the authorities for half a century at the total destruction of "superstition", "fanaticism" and religious survivals.

However, Gadaev correctly notes (*op. cit.*, p.51) that not all young believers are active adepts of *murid* brotherhoods. They do not attach themselves to a master (*ustad*) nor do they comply strictly with the rules of their *wird*. Many young people state that they are members of a *wird* "because of family tradition rather than because of their belief in the holy character of its founder".

It is interesting that the proportion of Sufi *murids* in the Chechen community is identical to that (noted by another Chechen specialist, Adam Karataev) of Chechens with a frankly hostile attitude towards atheists and anti-religious propaganda:[14]

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religiosity among rural youth"), *Kharakter religioznosti i problemy ateisticheskogo vopitaniia* (Groznyi 1979), pp. 40-57. Analysis by Marie Broxup, "Islam and atheism in the North Caucasus", *Religion in Communist Lands*, nos. 1-2, 1981, pp. 40-50.

14. Adam A. Karataev, Chief of the section of Sociology and Scientific Socialism of the Chechen-Ingush Institute of History, Sociology and Philosophy, "Partiinoe rukovodstvo protsessom formirovaniia ateisticheskogo mnenia" ("Party direction of the process of formation of atheistic opinion"), *Kharakter religioznosti*, op. cit., p. 21.

Attitudes to atheists and atheism	*Chechens*	*Ingush*	*Russians living in the Republic*
	%	%	%
Positive	20	21.8	38
Indifferent	34	33.8	22.5
Ignoring	25	22.6	22.7
Frankly hostile	11	7.0	2.8
No reply	8	15.8	14.0

It is likely that most of the Chechens and Ingush who had the courage to proclaim openly their hostility towards atheism and atheists are militant members of brotherhoods. It is also possible that the real proportion of opponents of atheism among Muslims of the republic is much higher than the figures given above, and comprises in particular a portion of the 8 per cent of Chechens and the 15.8 per cent of Ingush who refused to give an answer to the researchers.

When analysing the situation of brotherhoods in the Chechen-Ingush Republic (the best known of the Caucasian republics because of the numerous sociological surveys carried out by the Soviets), we note that between the end of the 1920s and when Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign ceased, the number of adepts of mystical brotherhoods remained more or less stable. Hadjibekir Bokov,[15] relates that in 1964 more than 1,000 persons attended the funeral of Qureish Belhoroev, the murshid of the *tariqat* of Batal Hadji, the most radically anti-Soviet and therefore the most persecuted and the most clandestine of all the Chechen brotherhoods. It is likely that the large majority of this crowd of mourners were adepts of the Batal Hadji *tariqat*. It is interesting to compare this figure with that of the 800 Batal Hadji adepts given by Kh. Oshaev for 1930.[16]

For Muslim territories of the Soviet Union other than the Chechen country our information is less precise, and it is therefore difficult to estimate the quantitative dimension of *tariqa* in those regions. However, we know from recent Soviet sources that *tariqa* are firmly established in Daghestan, and it is reasonable to suppose that in this republic, which is situated close to Chechnia and which has for the

15. H.H. Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (''Atheists on the attack''), op. cit., pp. 43-4.
16. Kh. Oshaev, *Revolutsiia i goretz*, op. cit.

last two centuries been a bulwark of the Naqshbandiya, the proportion of adepts to the total population is similar to that of the Chechens, namely about 10 per cent of the Muslim population. Certain surveys made in Daghestan in the 1960s and 1970s by a Soviet specialist, Irshad Agarzaevich Makatov, seem to confirm our opinion.

In the 1960s a study by the Sociology Laboratory of the Daghestan Pedagogical Institute in Makhach-Qala revealed that of the 945 believers that had been questioned, 459 (that is 48.2 per cent) were "believers by conviction" (*glubokii veruiushchii*). Seventy-one of the number (8.6 per cent) knew Arabic and were, according to the surveyors, "active propagandists of fanaticism".[17] These were most probably adepts of *tariqa*. We can estimate the proportion of believers among young people in Daghestan on the basis of results obtained from a survey made in 1966-7 in eighty-seven Daghestani villages. Of the young people aged between fourteen and thirty who were questioned, 19.5 per cent declared that they were believers.[18] At the beginning of the 1970s, Makatov carried out another survey of 2,400 persons belonging to "believing families", that is families in which at least one senior member, preferably the head of the household, was a believer. Out of the 2,400 persons questioned, 1,251 (52.2 per cent) were believers; 466 students of the Pedagogical Institute of the Lenin University of the republic of Daghestan and pupils of the upper forms of secondary schools were officially atheists; 507 were unbelievers (though members of believing families), and 175 were, as termed by the author, "out-of-mosque religious authorities". This expression is commonly used to designate chiefs of *tariqa*.[19] According to this survey, Sufi adepts represented 7.3 per cent of the sample of population as compared to the 9 per cent at the end of the 1920s. This figure is

17. I.A. Makatov, "Oslablenie religioznosti sovremennogo Musul'manstva na materialakh sotsiologicheskikh issledovanii v respublikakh Dagestana i Checheno-Ingushetii" ("Weakening of religious devotion of modern Islam according to Material of sociological investigations in republics of Daghestan and Chechen-Ingush country"), *Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii modernizatsii Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1968), p. 96.
18. S.Sh. Muslimov, "Nekotorye itogi konkretno-sotsiologicheskogo izucheniia otdel'ny aspektov mirovozreniia sel'skoi molodezhi" ("Some results of concrete sociological investigation of various aspects of conception of the world view of rural youth"), *Problemy filosofii i sotsiologii* (Makhach-Qala, 1969), pp. 74-5.
19. I.A. Makatov, *Islam, veruiushchii, sovremennost'* ("Islam, believers, contemporary life"), (Makhach-Qala, 1974), pp. 8 and 27.

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certainly much too low since, as admitted by the Soviet surveyors themselves, the *murids* tend more and more to practise *taqiya* and to conceal their connection with the *tariqa*.

In 1979, the total population of Daghestan was 1,388,000 of whom 1,267,000 were Daghestanis. The minimum number of *murids* in this republic might have been 95,000 individuals. We thus obtain for the two republics of the eastern Caucasus (Chechen-Ingush country and Daghestan) a substantial figure of 200,000 adepts of *tariqa*. In other Muslim republics and autonomous regions of the northern Caucasus, with the exception of the autonomous region of Karachay-Cherkess, the number of adepts seems to be insignificant.

Just one survey — but a very complete one — was made in the 1970s in Central Asia. It was carried out in a rural region, the Karakalpak Autonomous Republic,[20] and concerned 4,593 persons aged eighteen and above belonging to all the nationalities that inhabited the republic: Karakalpaks, Uzbeks, Kazakhs and Turkmens. The sample was composed of 1,426 state farm (*sovkhoz*) workers, 1,223 collective farm (*kolkhoz*) peasants, 418 employees, 54 agricultural experts, 104 tertiary industry workers, 838 retired persons, and 530 housewives. Of those questioned, 48 per cent were women. Djumanazar Bazarbaev,[21] who was responsible for the survey, divided the Muslim population of the surveyed region into six categories according to the intensity of the religious following. Within the first category, defined by him as "convinced believers" (*ubezhdennye veruushchii*), he placed the "intolerant fanatics" who refuse to hold any kind of dialogue with atheists. They constitute "the militant religious body" (*religioznyi aktiv*), according to the term used by Bazarbaev. Not satisfied with strictly observing religious rites themselves, they endeavour to "force their ideology on others". Bazarbaev does not explicitly state that he is thinking of *tariqa* adepts, but the specific features ascribed to believers of this category — intolerance, militancy, missionary spirit, refusal of any dialogue with atheists, evasion of the

20. The total population of the Karakalpak Autonomous Republic reached in 1979 the figure of 905,000 individuals, 95% of whom were Muslims (Karakalpaks 31%, Uzbeks 31.5%, Kazakhs 27%, Turkmens 5.3%). Russians represented only 2.3% of the population. Karakalpakistan is one of the most Turkic and Muslim regions of the Soviet Union.
21. Djumanazar Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia naseleniia sotsialisticheskoi Karakalpakii* ("Secularisation of the population of socialist Karakalpakiya"), (Nukhus, 1973), pp. 27-33.

Soviet psychological environment — correspond more or less to the characteristics with which Soviet authors endow Sufis.

The proportion of "fanatical believers" varies with social status:

	%
Employees	—
Agricultural experts	—
Workers of tertiary industries	1.7
Workers of *kolkhoz* and *sovkhoz*	3.5
Retired persons	33
Housewives	21

Bazarbaev made the following breakdown of the total population of Karakalpakistan:

	%	*made up of % men*	*% women*
Convinced believers	11.4	10.9	14.1
Believers by tradition	14.4	14.0	15.1
Wavering (between faith and unbelief)	13.6	13.3	14.1
Unbelievers but observing certain rites of Islam	18.5	17.2	19.3
Unbelievers but observing certain rites of Islam influenced by near relatives	20.6	21.2	20.1
Atheists	21.5	21.2	20.3

The data of the Karakalpak Republic can be applied by extension to other rural territories of Central Asia. It can also be advanced that a certain percentage of "religious fanatics" (half?) are adepts of *tariqa*. However, we must beware of hasty generalisations, since in the domain that we are studying every central Asian territory has its own profile. It would seem that nowadays Sufism is more widespread in Turkmenistan and in Kirghizia than in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. Karakalpakistan is situated midway between these two groups of territories, and Sufism is represented there in moderate proportions.

In 1979, the total population of Central Asia was approximately 27 million, of whom about 10 per cent were "fanatical believers", that is nearly 3 million. It is of course impossible to know exactly how many of them were adepts of *tariqa*. However, a minimum of 500,000 seems to us a reasonably understated figure.

Sociological surveys carried out in Muslim territories of the Soviet Union tend to demonstrate that the northern Caucasus remains in our time what it was in the last century, a stronghold of Sufism, the chosen land of *tariqa*. But here too we must avoid jumping to conclusions. Caucasian highlanders are naturally more aggressive and less cautious than the Turkestanis; the latter are more inclined to mistrust and secrecy, and often practise *taqiya*. In this connection a Kirghiz observer writes: "The adepts practise *taqiya* and one cannot be sure whether the *ishans* and the *murids* who proclaim in public their detachment from Ishanism do not state in the course of secret meetings that they have been forced to apostatise [by the authorities] but that this repudiation cannot be considered a sin if, in his heart of hearts, the disciple remains faithful to his *ishan*."[22]

As for the third Muslim region of Soviet Union — the Tatar country of the Middle Volga — we have no quantitative indications concerning *tariqa*, but it is likely that few, if any, *murids* still remain there.

The age and the social origin of the adepts are very difficult to ascertain. Information originating from Soviet sources is contradictory. Bazarbaev insists on the predominance of illiterate and "uncultured" people (*malogramotnye*) among the "fanatics", also of retired people and housewives — in short, politically negligible elements. Other official sources, on the contrary, stress the growing attraction exercised by Sufism on the young generation, principally young intellectuals. In December 1980 the Chief of the KGB of the republic of Azerbaijan, after having denounced in his report[23] "the dangers of criminal activities of imperialists — sabotage, spying, ideological subversion and infiltration of foreign agents", insisted particularly on the anti-social activity of clandestine groups of "sectarians" (the term commonly used to designate members of *tariqa*) and of "reactionary Muslim clergy" (another term for adepts of *tariqa*) with regard to representatives of Caucasian intelligentsia and young people.

Rare personal contacts with Muslim believers from the Soviet Union confirm the attraction of Sufism for the younger generation. This development is not paradoxical. A similar trend can also be observed among certain Soviet Christians and Jews. What better antidote can be

22. Satybaldy Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit., p. 39.
23. Published in *Bakinski Rabochii* of Baku, 19 December 1980.

found against the grey dullness and deadly tedium of the official *diamat* than the mystic way, and how better can one escape the invasion of the all-powerful and suffocating collectivisation than by applying the golden rule of the Naqshbandis — the *Khalwat dar Andjomars*, "Solitude in the midst of assembly"?

Recruitment: why Muslims become Sufis

The initiation of a believer to a Sufi brotherhood is a "point of no return". From this moment he embarks on a life of spiritual militancy totally dedicated to Islam, and in that life there is no place for any real, long-lasting compromise with the communist world. Thus the adept's general attitude towards the "other world" necessarily undergoes a radical change.

Why do Muslims join a brotherhood? Soviet specialists, who have undertaken several studies of this question in recent years, undoubtedly in response to the Soviet regime's directive that more be learned about the Sufi problem, provide us with some tentative answers. The specialists Aidaev and Pivovarov,[24] for example, conducted a survey among the inhabitants of a Chechen village in 1972 with some interesting results. Asked "Why did you become a *murid* of your particular master [*ustad*] and not of another?", the respondents provided the following answers:

	%
By personal choice	32.2
Inherited from their parents	36.4
Claimed not to be adepts	10.1
Refused to answer	15.3
No explanation	6.0

24. We can assume that the survey was conducted in the native language of the region; moreover, it should be noted that whereas a "survey" of Sufis would be impossible in Central Asia, where clandestinity is scrupulously adhered to, in Chechnia Sufis often openly admit their affiliation to the brotherhoods. The question "Why did you become a *murid* of your particular master and not of another?" is of the "Have you stopped beating your wife?" variety, where it is assumed that at some time the unfortunate wife was indeed beaten. From their responses, it is clear that Aidaev and Pivovarov's respondents — at least the 10.1% who denied that they belonged to a brotherhood at all and the 15.3% who simply declined to answer — understood that they were being asked in this indirect manner if they

It is useful to compare these responses to questions about the religiosity of inhabitants of a Chechen village (probably the same one) administered again by Aidaev and Pivovarov.[25] From a survey of 117 respondents, the following results were obtained:

		%
Believers by conviction	46	39.3
Believers by tradition	64	54.7
Believers for other reasons	7	6.0

Of those aged between eighteen and forty-five, 59.2 per cent were "believers by tradition" and 40.8 per cent "believers by conviction". Above the age of fifty-five years, the proportions of the two groups were equal. It is interesting to note that the proportion of "believers by conviction" in the second survey corresponds roughly to the proportion of Sufi adepts who joined a brotherhood "by personal choice". In another survey, conducted by I.A. Makatov in Daghestan, of 945 "believers" 459 (or 48.5 per cent) were found to be "firm believers" (*glubokoveruiushchie musul'mane*), which suggests again a considerable number of Sufis. Of this number, seventy-one could read the Quran, and sixty-nine performed the five daily prayers, went to the mosque, fasted and performed all Islamic rites, and believed in a future life.[26] To these findings we can add information gleaned mainly from personal contacts with Soviet Muslims and from the discreet inquiries by foreign Muslims while visiting the Soviet Union. Mostly their observations support the findings of the Soviet sociologists.

To understand the process by which a believer decides to join a Sufi brotherhood, one must understand that Soviet anti-Islamic propaganda and the heavy-handed anti-Muslim behavior to which all areas of the Soviet Muslim world have been subjected for more than half a century

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were in fact *murids*. Yu. Aidaev and V.G. Pivovarov, "Problemy konkretnykh issledovanii religii", in *Sotsiologia, ateizm, religiia* (Groznyi, 1972), p. 17.

25. Ibid., p. 17.
26. I.A. Makatov, "'Oslablenie religioznosti sovremennogo Musul'manstva — na materialakh sotsiologicheskikh issledovannii v respubliskakh Dagestana i Checheno-Ingushetii", in *Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii Modernizatsiia Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1968), p. 97.

constitute a truly powerful incentive to oppose the Russian Marxists by whatever means possible. Of course all minority nationality regions of the Soviet Union have been subjected to militant atheism, but in the Muslim regions the anti-Islamic message is brought by Godless alien imperialists who, even under the best conditions, would be hard-pressed to pass themselves off as anything less. In the Muslim regions of the Soviet Union, where many completely developed cultural identities and some partial political ones intermingle in different proportions to form the basis of a complex psycho-social mosaic, the Soviet atheistic onslaught has, not surprisingly, precipitated some intense personal and collective soul-searching. One need not be well-versed in psychology to understand intuitively that in an environment where your own cultural and historical values are condemned, ridiculed and outlawed, while those of an alien power are sanctified, enshrined and given the status of eternal verities, the former quickly become more attractive and their protection is seen to require a new urgency. The decision to become a Sufi is one answer to this challenge. Thus one becomes a Sufi in self-defence.

In a sense, Sufism has the aura of "forbidden fruit": "If the authorities denounce something it must be important" is a syndrome one encounters frequently in Central Asia and in all other regions of the Soviet empire. The passionate interest in Sufism of Soviet Muslim intellectuals, academics, even bureaucrats who are able to visit foreign countries, can be compared to that of Soviet Russians, who can frequently be found scouring foreign libraries and bookstores for the writings of Trotsky or Solzhenitsyn during those moments when their "chaperones" have found other amusement. Thus one becomes a Sufi out of curiosity.

One can also become a Sufi by discovering or rediscovering the brilliant Sufi literary tradition. For the last twenty years Central Asian, Tatar, and Caucasian intelligentsia have been active in the rehabilitation of historical literary figures and in the re-publication of their greatest works. The great majority of these historical literary and philosophical figures were Sufi mystics, and it is these men — Ali-Shir Nava'i, Abdurrahman Jami, Mahtum Quli, Zelili, Bedil, Amir-i Khosrow, Nezami, Fuzuli, Ahmed Yasawi, Shihabeddin Marjani, Abu Nasr Kursavi and others — who are currently being exhibited in the Soviet Union as examples of great ancestors and as progressive and

popular thinkers. In their Soviet form, the works of these men are of course expunged of their most "clerical" and "reactionary" aspects; still, they are thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of Sufi mysticism, especially — in the case of later writers — by the spirit of the Naqshbandiya. It is possible in these works to discover attractive philosophical and ethical values considerably different from — and opposed to — the prevailing Marxism-Leninism.

One can also come to Sufism as a result of frustration over the inability of the official Soviet Islamic establishment to do its job properly. In the Islamic establishment permitted by the Soviet regime, there are too few working mosques — probably fewer than 450 in the entire Soviet Union — and too many *imam-khatibs* who have been compromised as a result of their uncritical attitude towards Soviet power. Rightly or wrongly, many official clerics — i.e. those permitted to practise Islam by the Soviet regime — have the reputation of being KGB informers.

Others are attracted to Sufism by its aesthetic appeal. Even several Soviet specialists have noted the appeal of the Sufi *zikr* of both the Naqshbandiya and the Qadiriya.[27] Apparently the Vis Haji *zikr* is particularly enticing because of its use of songs and violins.[28]

Some individuals become Sufis because of Sufism's mystical appeal, although the number probably is small. S. Mambetaliev, a Kirghiz specialist, records one example of such an individual. At a trial of Hairy Ishans for various religious crimes, a young Komsomol member was asked how he could reconcile being a member of the communist youth organisation with being a Sufi. He replied: "I am a Komsomol in this world and a *murid* in the other world."[29]

As noted earlier, Sufis have always been prominent in the Muslim resistance movements against Russian domination. Some of the most famous resistance fighters, such as Shamil in the Caucasus, Ishan Madali in Ferghana and Kurban Murat in Turkmenistan, were Sufis, and their legends remain exceptionally vivid among Muslims throughout their regions. It is not surprising, therefore, to discover that some individuals are drawn to Sufism because it is in their minds synonomous with resistance to Russia: that is, with a kind of Muslim

27. M.M. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm i ego sotsial'naia sushchnost'* (Groznyi, 1971), pp. 23-5.
28. Ibid., p. 29.
29. S. Mambetaliev, *Sufizm zhana anyng Qyrgzstandagy agymdary* (Frunze, 1972), p. 49 (quoting *Pravda Vostoka*, 25 October 1935).

nationalism. Sufism as a whole benefits from this confusion. Because of it, the Sufi brotherhoods appear to many as the embodiment of a heroic national tradition and as an island of "national" life from which the Russians are by definition excluded. "We are among ourselves," the Sufi adage runs. To counter this trend, some Soviet historians have tried to present Tsarist conquests as progressive and welcome events in the lives of the Muslims and, by contrast, the Sufi-led resistance as reactionary, parasitic and always ready to betray the popular resistance.[30]

Finally, in our search for reasons why individuals are drawn to Sufism, we should not discount the most seemingly benign reasons. A survey conducted in Uzbekistan by Tashkent University in 1976-7 revealed one such benign reason. In answer to a request that he explain why, as a former atheist, he was regularly attending prayers at the local mosque on Fridays, the respondent — euphemistically identified as a Sufi — replied: "I am bored [*skuchno mne*], that's why I learned to read the *namaz* [prayer]." And he added: "Just wait. You will also learn it when the time comes; it will help you too."[31]

Today the majority of Sufi adepts are recruited in the family circle, which more and more tends to replace the mosque as the religious centre. Soviets sources confirm that it is in the native family — small, patriarchal or extended — that religious rites, customs and traditions survive best. Muslim families continue to follow a more or less traditional style of life. As a rule, few listen to radio broadcasts in Russian, which on radio has all but replaced the native language in some places. Family life is still dominated by the elders, the aqsakals, who for the most part are religious people. Soviet authorities appear to

30. This thesis is developed by a Chechen historian living in Kazakhstan, A.D. Iandarov, in his *Sufizm i ideologiia natsional'no-osvoboditel 'nogo dvizheniia — Iz istorii razvitiia obshchestvennykh idei v Checheno-Ingushetii v 20-70 gg.,* XIX v. (Alma Ata, 1975). Iandarov tries to oppose the positive and progressive "*Naibat* muridism" (Shamil's military organisation) to the reactionary and negative "*Tariqa* muridism" (the mystical Sufi movement). The same idea underlies a recent campaign in Turkmenisan against Kurban Murat, the Naqshbandi sheikh who inspired the resistance of the Tekke tribe in 1879-81. (Cf. M. Annapesov and S. Saparov, "Podlinnoe litso ishana — Pravda o 'sviatykh mestakh' ", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 9 January 1982. In this article the authors compare Kurban Murat, a Naqshbandi sheikh, unfavourably to the "real leaders" of the non-religious resistance, calling him a "traitor and a coward".)
31. *Voprosy Ateisticheskogo i Internatsional'nogo vospitaniia trudiashchikhsia (Sbornik nauchnykh trudov,* no. 537 (Tashkent, 1977), p. 76.

be largely unable to penetrate this secluded milieu through their anti-religious lecturers, who conduct anti-religious talks with the family *in situ*. On the other hand, according to one Soviet sociologist, the Sufi brotherhoods find the family to be a resonant milieu for recruitment.[32]

Members of the family still pray together and listen to the pious lectures of the elder. Often one of the elders — father, elder brother, uncle — is the member of a brotherhood, and it is he who introduces young members to it. As one specialists of Karakalpakia writes: "Ishanism is hereditary."[33] In some areas, especially in the North Caucasus and in Turkmenistan where the clan structure is still a social reality and where its inner rules are still compulsory, the majority of the members of an extended family or of a clan are *ipso facto* adepts of a brotherhood. S. Umarov describes a Naqshebandiya *zikr* in the Chechen village of Kurchaloy which was conducted in the presence of all members of the family living in the village. This gathering of some twenty people included the chairman of the local *kolkhoz* and the Secretary of the village soviet, both obviously members of the Communist Party.[34] In some brotherhoods, such as the Batal Haji and the Vis Haji which are completely closed communities protected by endogamous taboos, all members of the social unit — patriarchal family, extended family or *taipa* — automatically and without exception become members of the brotherhood when they reach adulthood. Indeed, as the Soviet specialist Klimovich points out, there often exists a delicate symbiosis between Sufism and clannishness which clearly contributes to Sufi efforts to recruit in this environment:

> The cult of the *murshid-ustad* [master] is confused with clan survivals . . . The leaders of the *murid* communities and the elders, heads of families and clans . . . educate the faithful, including those of the younger generation in the belief that the preservation in the memory of the *murid* leaders of the observance of religious rites and of religious customs and rules is the symbol and guarantee of the preservation of family and clan honour and of national existence.[35]

32. V.G. Pivovarov, "Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia problem byta, natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Checheno-Ingushkoi ASSR", *Voprosy nauchogo ateizma*, no. 76, 1975, p. 317.
33. Dzh. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia naseleniia sotsialisticheskoi Karakalpakii* (Nukus, 1973), p. 78.
34. Umarov, op. cit., p. 30.
35. L. Klimovich, "Bor'ba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 2, 1966, p. 85.

Recruitment of adepts in the professional milieu is probably the next most important location after recruitment in the family. During the last thirty years, Sufi brotherhoods have penetrated some Soviet institutions such as the professional guilds and village assemblies, and are noticeably active in such unexpected places as prisons, camps and military barracks. Recruitment is usually due to the spiritual and moral prestige of a sheikh or a senior *murid*, who can encourage recruitment through personal contact with potential adepts. Newly-recruited Sufis then themselves become recruiting agents. In these situations, the Sufi brotherhood becomes for adepts — particularly the younger ones — a surrogate family, which helps him to order his life and gives him protection against a hostile environment.[36]

Sufi adepts are recruited mainly from the countryside and from the middle- and lower-class city inhabitants; in this sense, the social structure of the brotherhoods would appear to have changed little since the Revolution. Recently, however, we have found a substantial body of information to suggest that Sufism in the Soviet Union is now attracting more and more intellectuals and those with higher education. An article in *Pravda* (January 19, 1981) relates the story a school teacher of the Krasnovodsk region of the Turkmen SSR who is a member of the Communist Party and "a man of considerable experience as a propagandist, who worked in responsible posts for many years", but who was finally run to ground for moonlighting as a mullah. A more recent example is provided by *Turkmenskaia Iskra* (April 3, 1982), which recounts the unmasking of a conscientious Communist Party member and history teacher, who "after imparting proper materialist concepts to his students during school hours, transforms himself into an *ishan* in the evening." Examples such as these are plentiful.

Sufi adepts tend to be middle-aged, except where initiation to a brotherhood is automatic at adulthood. Recently, however, Soviet specialists have begun to show some concern that Sufism is an attraction to younger people. Foreign Muslims who have spent considerable time in the Soviet Union confirm this trend to the authors. Moreover, Soviet authorities can exact little pleasure from the findings of one of their own experts on children: the most radical

36. In the same way and for the same reasons the Sufi brotherhoods have recently recruited intensively in the Pul-i Charkhi prison in Afghanistan.

brotherhood, the Vis Haji, would appear to have the greatest success in attracting young people.[37] Some Soviet specialists insist, however, that Sufis "belong to the older generation and have pre-revolutionary education",[38] but this probably has not been the case for some years and is certainly not the case now.

Soviet scholars consistently refer to Sufi adepts in terms of their various manifestations of fanaticism. Most agree that the Sufis are intractable in their commitment to Islam and that, if permitted to prosletyse and propagate Islam, they are a serious threat to "Soviet influences". These specialists also agree that to reason with the Sufis is impossible, and that in most cases Sufis simply refuse to associate themselves with non-believers. Specialists who attempt to distinguish between different kinds of Muslim believers always list Sufis as the most fanatical.[39] One gets a clear view of the nature of this threat to Soviet influence and control among Muslims in the work of the Daghestani specialist M.V. Vagabov. Vagabov divides Muslims into categories on the basis of their observance of Islamic rites, duties and customs. He notes, for example, that while most Soviet Muslims observe the rites of circumcision, a religious marriage and a religious burial, and while others participate in more rigorous forms of observance such as fasting, daily prayers, Islamic festivals and pilgrimage to holy places, Sufis concentrate their attention on activities that are essential to the maintenance of Islam as more than a folkloric survival: teaching the Quran to children, initiation of *murids*, the establishment of religious groups especially among children and young people, open religious propaganda, the collection of the *sadaqa* (voluntary contribution to the mosque), and the maintenance of the practises of *kalym* (brideprice) and polygamy. Vagabov notes, correctly, that many of these activities contravene Soviet law; implicitly his real concern, again correctly, is that the clumsy official

37. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm*, op. cit., pp. 27-8.
38. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia*, op. cit., pp. 27-33.
39. Dzh. Bazarbaev, "Nekotorye itogi izucheniia religioznosti naseleniia Karakalpakii", in *Kontretnye issledovaniia sovremennykh religioznykh verovanii* (Moscow, 1967), p. 196; I.A. Makatov, "Kul 't sviatykh v Islame (na materialakh Dagestanskoi ASSR i Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 3. 1967, pp. 181 – 2; V.G. Pivovarov, *Na etapakh sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia* (Groznyi, 1974), pp. 33-4; Hajibekir Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 81.

Soviet anti-religious counter-offensive has little chance of success against the disciplined Sufis.[40]

There are unquestionably some real "fanatics" among the Sufis, especially in the North Caucasus where the spirit of martyrdom is strong, but their number is probably very small. Nonetheless we should be cautious about adopting Soviet parlance, in which phenomena like Sufism, which are little understood and, even more important, little controlled by the Soviet regime, are verbally radicalized to leave the impression that they are so far socially and politically beyond the pale that no sane person could find them attractive. In fact, the adepts are in most cases ordered to avoid martyrdom, to "keep his place in the world". He is even permitted to perform the "prayers in case of danger" (*salat-i khawf*) or the "prayer of illness" (*salat-i mariz*) to give justification to his efforts to avoid martyrdom. He may live among infidels (in the army, for example) and even eat pork and drink vodka where it is necessary to do so in order to ensure his physical survival. A Karakalpak expert on atheism explains:

> If your soul is firmly attached to Islam, then apparent atheism and godlessness in words will not hurt your belief. In order to disguise yourself, you may even oppose God openly and denounce the Muslim clergy. Your body and your tongue may be "kafir", but your soul will remain Muslim.[41]

> Where as for Christians it is a sin to deny, in the manner of Peter, that they are what they are, Sufis not only are exempt from this "sin" but, in theory, are permitted to renounce their faith publicly in moments of acute crisis. Paradoxically, this makes them stronger Muslims and, by ensuring that its soldiers will live to fight another day, it strengthens Islam.

Women in the Sufi brotherhoods

Before the Revolution, the Sufi brotherhoods of the Russian Empire were, as a rule, limited to men alone. After the Second World War, in

40. M.V. Vagabov, "Perezhitki Islama v Dagestane i spetsifika ikh proiavlenii", in *Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii 'modernizatsiia Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1968). pp. 128-9.
41. T. Izimbetov, *Islam i sovremennost'* (Nukus, 1963), p. 101.

the North Caucasus and in Central Asia several brotherhoods agreed to the creation of special groups reserved for women and led by female sheikhs. Makatov, for example, notes the existence of special women's groups of Sufis in Daghestan (in the district of Nizhnie Inkho) among the Naqshbandi and Qadiri, led by women sheikhs.[42] In a more recent work, the same author remarks on the existence of similar groups in Khunzakh and Gumbetov, and notes that local authorities have taken no measures to impede this development; female anti-religious propagandists are, he notes, particularly scarce in these regions.[43] T.S. Saidbaev also points to women's Sufi groups in Daghestan, usually of the Qadiriya, and remarks correctly that such groups have never existed before in any Muslim country. Moreover, Saidbaev explains, the concept of women Sufis has been condemned specifically in a *fetwa* of the Muslim Spiritual Board of the North Caucasus, the official Soviet watchdog organisation.[44]

In the Chechen-Ingush Republic, we find several references to the activity of women's Sufi groups among the Qadiri.[45] The very secret Batal Haji brotherhood has a special interest in recruiting women adepts,[46] and in the recently created Vis Haji brotherhood women adepts are even accepted in the *zikr* ceremonies, a practice forbidden by all other brotherhoods.[47]

In Central Asia, the Naqshbandis seem reluctant to open their brotherhood to women. The only references to the presence of women in Central Asian brotherhoods concerns two radical and secret offshoots of the Yasawiya: the brotherhood of the Laachis and the radical "Hairy Ishans". These brotherhoods have special women's groups with women sheikhs.[48]

Perhaps more than even before the Revolution, women in the Soviet Union are "the wardens of national tradition". They are probably more attached to religious beliefs, customs and traditions; at the same time they are likely to be more involved in the social, economic and

42. I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy Amaiia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Makhach-Qala, 1965), pp. 18, 25.
43. Makatov, *Kul't sviatykh v Islame*, p. 177.
44. T.S. Saidbaev, *Islam i obschestvo* (Moscow, 1978), p. 215.
45. Bokov, *Ateisty*, op. cit., p. 43.
46. A.M. Turkaev, *Reaksionaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 12.
47. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm*, op. cit. p. 32.
48. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki nekotorykh musul 'manskikh techenii v Kirgizii i ikh istoriia* (Frunze, 1969), pp. 31, 36.

even political life of their communities. It is too early to draw any conclusions from this, but it should escape no one's notice that Muslim women who are becoming Sufis appear to be joining the most radical orders. To date, no Soviet specialist has produced an estimate of the number of women belonging to the Sufi brotherhoods.

4

THE ORGANISATION OF THE SUFI BROTHERHOODS

The centralised brotherhoods

We may place two groups in this category: the North Caucasian Qadiriya, the structure of which is well-known thanks to recent Soviet surveys, and the little-known Yasawiya groups of Central Asia, the Hairy Ishans and the Laachis. The main identifying characteristic of the centralised brotherhood is the existence of a unique leader (*murshid*, *pir*, *sheikh*) who may be compared to a monarch and whose indisputable orders[1] are transmitted through a complicated hierarchy of executives whom he himself has nominated. These brotherhoods possess a well-structured and well-disciplined organisation,[2] which is inherently capable of clandestine activity.

As a rule, leadership of these brotherhoods remains in the family of the founder.[3] Kunta Haji Kishiev, who introduced the Qadiriya to the North Caucasus, established a rigorous organisational chart. After his death in a Russian prison, his authority was delegated to his *vekils* (infrequently called *khalifa*), and these became the leaders of the four Qadiriya *wird* without officially assuming the title of *murshid* or sheikh. The *wirds* took the names of these *vekils*, which they bear to this day: Bammat Giray Haji Mitaev, Battal Haji Belkhoroev, Chim Mirza, and

1. V.G. Pivovarov, "Sotsiologicheskie issledovanie problem byta, natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Chechno-Ingushskoi ASSR", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 17, 1975, p. 316.
2. A well-known expert in religious affairs, Krianev, makes a major mistake when, having correctly compared the Kunta Haji and the Batal Haji brotherhoods to various Christian eschatological-millenarist sects (Adventists, Molokans, Priguny, and Khlysty), he writes: "These groups have a reduced ritual and are characterised by the absence of permanent structures." In the case of the Qadiri groups it is exactly the opposite.
3. Today, with the exception of the North Caucasian groups, the leadership of the Qadiri brotherhoods is still in the hands of the descendants of Abd al-Qadir al-Ghailani, the founder of the brotherhood. Such is especially the case of the Afghan Qadiris.

Omar Haji, who assumed leadership of the original Kunta Haji. Kunta Haji left no descendants, but the leadership of the four *wirds* of his brotherhood remains today in the families of their founders: the Mitaev family in the Bammat Giray brotherhood; the Belhoroev family in the Batal Haji brotherhood;[4] and the Chim Mirza family in the Chim Mirza brotherhood. The leadership of the latest *wird* to spring from the Kunta Haji, the Vis Haji, remains in the family of its founder, Vis Haji Zagiev.

In spite of their ritual differences, all Qadiriya *wird* remain closely tied by a strong sense of purpose. Even Vis Haji Zagiev, whose brotherhood is the most divorced from the original Qadiriya stem, never claims to be a *murshid*, the founder of a new brotherhood line; rather he pretends to be a *vekil* of the original Kunta Haji. Soviet specialists have observed this phenomenon and have commented on a new trend: the attempts to "federate" different *wirds* under a collective leadership with each group maintaining its special characteristics while accepting collegial decisions on over-riding political concerns. One Soviet specialist has noted that even in a collegial arrangement of this kind someone must lead; in the case of the offshoots of the Qadiriya, this role increasingly falls to the most anti-Soviet, most popular, and most dynamic of the *wirds*, the newly-created Vis Haji.[5]

Under the Vis Haji the disrupted unity of the Kunta Haji, which followed naturally from the founder's death more than a century ago, is gradually being restored. Our knowledge of this development is limited and incomplete, but some trends appear to be reasonably clear. In 1980 one of the most astute Soviet Sufi-watchers in the North Caucasus, M.V. Vagabov, reported that in April 1969 a (secret?) meeting of the leaders of various "*murid* groups" was held on the occasion of a funeral at the cemetery of the Al'tievo aul in the district of Nazran in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. (Vagabov does not identify the groups as other than "zikrists", which means that they were Qadiris.) At the meeting a common ten-point rule (*izvlechenie*) was established to deal with various family concerns of the brotherhoods

4. The Batal Haji was and still is the special target of Soviet security forces. Dozens of descendants of Batal Haji, the founder of the brotherhood in 1867, have been killed in battle by Russian and Soviet security forces or have died in prisons and camps. In spite of this almost century-long repression, in 1964 the leadership of the *wird* still belonged to the great-grandson of the founder Ismail Belhoroev. Cf. A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968).
5. H. Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 44.

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(marriage, education and so forth).[6] Hajibekir Bokov, another Soviet specialist makes a similar observation, noting that it is during funerals that representatives usually meet to discuss common problems "concerning the defence of Islam and of the Shari'yat".[7]

Qadiriya brotherhoods of the North Caucasus are well-structured hierarchies. The head of the brotherhood has *vekils* or delegates of his own, who control and direct the "elders" (*tkhamada*, or — in Russian — *starosta*), who are the brotherhood's representatives at the district level. Orders of the *sheikh* are transmitted by a special category of executives, the *turkhi* (in Russian, *ispolniteli* or *glashatai*),[8] who in addition are responsible for directing the brotherhoods at the village level.

Our knowledge of the Yasawi groups in Turkestan is limited, but it seems that both the Laachis and the Hairy Ishans were and still are centralised organisations who obey one supreme leader. Among the Laachi, he was called "Ata" (father) and his orders were transmitted to the adepts by his delegates (*sarkarlar* or *naib*).[9] We can determine as well that the Hairy Ishans had and may still have one supreme leader: in the 1930s it was one Abdumutalib Satybaldev, who was arrested and probably executed in 1935. In the post-Second World War period, leadership was assumed by one *ishan*, Tursunbay Madaripov, who was jailed several times and tried between 1952 and 1959.[10]

The centralised brotherhood is certainly better equipped for conspiratorial work as a result of its tighter hierarchy and stronger discipline. Orders issued from above are passed and accepted as they are, thus insuring a more strenuous ideological and political continuity from top to bottom. It is possible that the most radical groups, such as the Vis Haji, Batal Haji and the Yasawiya brotherhoods, are better adapted to survive in the hostile Soviet environment than are more conservative groups such as the Naqshbandiya. (It is also interesting to note that these same radical groups also appear willing to adopt modern techniques — such as the use of cassettes to pass information from one group to another — more quickly than others.) The

6. M.V. Vagabov, *Islam i Sem'ia* (Moscow, 1980), pp. 142-3.
7. H. Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii,* op. cit., p.44.
8. Cf. among others, Kh. V. Mamleev, *Reaktsionaia sushchnost' muridizma* (Groznyi, 1966).
9. S. Mambetaliev, *Sufizm zhana anyng Qyrgyzstandagy agymdary* (Frunze, 1972), p. 62.
10. Ibid., pp. 50-1.

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Qadiriya groups, in particular, could be compared to conspiratorial underground political organisations. But because of their hierarchical structures, where the chain of command is known even if the identity of ordinary adepts is not, these brotherhoods are inherently vulnerable to frontal assaults by Soviet police organisations. At least partly in order to draw in their forces around them to defend against Soviet persecution, these brotherhoods have cultivated their clandestine, "closed society" character. In some cases, such as among members of the Vis Haji and the Batal Haji, the urge to exclusiveness is expressed by members refusing to wear clothes manufactured in Soviet textile mills, to eat food prepared by non-Muslims, and to have contact either with both non-Muslims or even with Muslims who are not members of their brotherhood.

Decentralised brotherhoods

All Naqshbandi groups in Central Asia and the Caucasus belong to this category. There is no unique Naqshbandi centre, no supreme leader, and the *sheikhs* or *murshids* of the brotherhood in theory are not hereditary. Leaders emerge from an almost democratic process — from the general concensus of the adepts and of their *sheikhs* — rather than by nomination from a supreme *sheikh*. Brotherhood unity, which is still very real, is based on a commonly shared psychological and doctrinal "ideology", not on a chain-of-command hierarchy which instills blind obedience among its followers.

Naqshbandi groups have, on the average, between thirty and fifty *murids* in Central Asia and between ten and forty in the Caucasus, under the direction of a *sheikh* or a senior *murid*. They are less well organised for underground work than the Qadiri, for example, but because they have no recognisable hierarchy, they more easily escape the notice of Soviet police authorities.

One of the best descriptions we have of the decentralised brotherhoods comes from a Caucasian observer of the Naqshbandiya groups in Chechnia, but his description is valid for other areas of the Caucasus and the whole of Central Asia:

> During the last 20-30 years, *muridism* in Checheno-Ingushetia has undergone many changes, and it is possible to say that it has finally found the most appropriate form for today's conditions. This is the small *murid* community. As a rule this community is composed of related families living in the same village, but it could be the case that the families live in different auls. The

religious head of such a community is a mullah (if a mullah can be found among the *murids*), or the most active among the *murids* who is more or less able to replace the mullah. Formally, each small *murid* community is related to a *murid* brotherhood and on the religious authority of one of its founders — a *sheikh* long dead. But in our republic there are no systematic and compulsory ties between representatives of a *sheikh*. Such ties disappeared long ago. The communities have no general leader, common rules [*ustav*] or coordinated policies. . . .[11]

It is necessary to emphasise that while there are some elements of "democratic" behaviour among the Naqshbandi, the spiritual authority of the *sheikh* remains absolute and has not been replaced by a "collective leadership", as the above observer claims. Decentralised Sufi bodies remain monarchic in spirit and structure, not unlike the ruling Soviet Politburo. It may be the case, moreover, that under the influence of Qadiriya brotherhoods the leadership of Naqshbandi groups is becoming hereditary.[12] This is noticeably the case of the "holy tribes" of the Turkmen (Ata, Shikh, Khoja, Müjevur, Mahtum and Seyid), which traditionally provide the spiritual leaders to the Sufi brotherhoods operating among Turkmen tribes.[13]

Internal organisation

Probably less is known about this aspect of the Sufi brotherhoods in the Soviet Union than any other. Soviet experts can shed little light on the internal structure of the brotherhoods, and it would appear, not surprisingly, that the KGB has so far been unable to penetrate the Sufi organisations sufficiently to entice a single influential Sufi leader to reveal "the secrets". We may assume that almost since the end of the

11. S. Umarov, "Muridizm s blizkogo rasstoianiia," *Nauka i Religiia*, no. 10, 1979, p. 31.
12. Dzh. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia naseleniia sotsialisticheskoi Karakalpakii* (Nukus, 1973), p. 78, writes: "In Karakalpakistan, ishanism is hereditary." In Turkmenistan, the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Kurban Murat in Gök-Tepe has been "reactivated" in the 1970s a century after the death of the sheikh by his descendant, also a Naqshbandi *ishan*. Cf. K. Ovezov, "Vliianie religioznykh organizatsii dukhovenstva i aktivnykh veruiushchikh na sokhranenie religioznykh perezhitkov", *Religioznye perezhitki i puti ikh preodoleniia v Turkmenistane* (Ashkhabad, 1977), p. 69.
13. Cf. the best scientific work on this subject, S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady* (Ashkhabad, 1976).

Second World War in the North Caucasus and since the return of the deported mountaineers to their homelands in the 1960s, the inner structure of the Sufi orders has been undergone significant modifications. What we do know is that the Sufi brotherhoods of Soviet Union have some specific features which distinguish them from all other Sufi brotherhoods in other Muslim countries. These special characteristics include a new social flexibility among some, such as the Vis Haji, which allows adepts to work in ordinary Soviet industries — wine and tobacco industries included, a kind of involvement that would have been unthinkable before the war. From this it is reasonable to conclude that Sufi leaders are secure in their power and feel that their adepts are secure in their belief in Islam: the possibility of their yielding to outside temptations is not a pressing concern for them.[14] Some Soviet specialists pretend that Sufi adepts are kept in line under threat of ferocious punishments that include beatings, forced mountain marches, starvation and even death,[15] implying that temptations in the Soviet world are powerful. Anyone who knows the Soviet Union and the inability of the system to provide incentives of real quality must doubt this claim, although it is certain that the brotherhoods do practise their own brand of justice among themselves when required. Some Soviet sources speak of special clandestine *shari'yat* courts, with the *sheikh* of the brotherhood ruling supreme[15] and even local defence groups to be used against the enemies of Islam.[16]

14. Kh.B. Mamleev, *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyi, 1970), p. 29.
15. I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy Amaia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1970), p. 26 and passim.
16. A.M. Tutaev, *Protiv sektanskogo bezzakoniia* (Groznyi, 1975), p. 15; and, by the same author, *Reaktsionaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 19.

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THE INNER LIFE OF THE SUFI BROTHERHOODS

Our knowledge of the inner life of the Sufi brotherhoods in the Soviet Union is limited and at best superficial. Soviet experts, regardless of the degree of access they might have to the Sufi orders, shed little light on the individual mystical experience of the adepts or on the more general religious activity of the brotherhoods. We have been able to glean some information from foreign Muslims who have travelled to the Soviet Union and who are familiar with Sufi organisation and practice; these observations will be used here to flesh out our description.

The inner life of the brotherhoods is difficult to penetrate not only because adepts practise secrecy as part of their creed, but also because they have at their disposal the generalised practice of *taqiya* (which comes from the Arabic for "caution" or "fear"). *Taqiya* is the practice by which adepts may disavow their attachment to Islam when under extreme compulsion or threat of injury without falling into sin. Put another way, *taqiya* is the sanctioned right to apostasy, or dissimulation. For the outsider trying to peer in, this makes the task of identifying the adept, let alone understanding the basis of his commitment, all the harder. Notes a Kirghiz expert:

> The adepts practice *taqiya* and nobody can be certain that the *ishans* and the *murids* who proclaim publicly their divorce from ishanism do not at the same time tell their *murids* during their secret meetings that they are obliged under compulsion to do so, but that it is not a sin if, in the secret of their heart, they remain loyal to their *ishan*.[1]

Seen from a purely political standpoint, a Sufi *tariqat* may appear as a kind of clandestine surrogate underground political party organisation, but we should never forget that it is above all a mystical association of individuals united by their will to tread along a path to God under the guidance of a master and while observing compulsory rules which

1. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki nekotorykh musul'manskikh techenii v Kirghizii i ikh istoriia* (Frunze, 1969), p. 39.

were laid down by the founder of the brotherhood.

The weekly meeting of a group of from ten to forty adepts to perform a *zikr* under the direction of their master is the only regular collective function of the Sufis. As in the past, a Sufi brotherhood still revolves around this personal, vertical loyalty of disciple to master, a relationship which requires total obedience and submission. According to a famous Sufi saying, the disciple is comparable "to a cadaver in the hands of an embalmer". Despite the requirement that the adept must "live in the world" in order to be indistinguishable from ordinary people, the *murid* in fact is in a kind of psychological isolation from his everyday social milieu; instead, his intellectual energies remain rigidly focused on his master.

The *murid* undergoes no complicated initiation ceremony. It is done by a simple imposition of hands. The master gives the *murid* instruction in prayer, meditation, and the performance of the *zikr*. In addition to the obligatory five daily prayers (*namaz*), the adept must perform several supplementary prayers (*wazifa*) and nightly surrogatory prayers (*tawajjud*). The life of the advanced *murid* — and even more so for a sheikh — becomes a permanent prayer: he is permanently "mobilised" and engages in unending intensive spiritual and mental concentration.[2]

Another area in which the Sufi adept is more rigorous in his belief than an ordinary Muslim is in the observance of another pillar of the faith, the payment of *zakat*. All possessions of the adept in theory belong to the brotherhood. Soviet sources are very clear on this point. For example, in a 1964 trial of a group of Naqshbandi *murids* for "banditism", adepts were discovered by the Supreme Court of the Daghestan ASSR to have contributed one-third of all their assets to the brotherhood.[3] This example seems to be typical.

Sufi adepts are also more conscientious about fasting (*sawn*, *uraza*). In addition to keeping the normal Muslim fasts during the month of Ramadhan, Sufis generally fast during special days during the months of Sha'ban and Rajab. Because the pilgrimage to the holy places of Saudi Arabia (*haj*) is reserved for only a small handful of "tame" Muslims of the Soviet Union each year, it is usually impossible for a Sufi adept to perform this "basis of the true faith". In its place, the

2. This may explain why during the last 20 years Soviet sources have not mentioned a single case of apostasy by Sufi adepts.
3. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (Stavropol, 1973), p. 100.

Sufi adept substitutes a pilgrimage to one of the local holy places, usually the tomb of a Sufi saint. For the Sufi adept such a pilgrimage is considered compulsory and is seen as a measure of devotion to the brotherhood.

Jihad, "holy war", has a double meaning in Islam. The "greater *jihad*" is an internal war waged against oneself, against the temptation to personal sin; the "lesser *jihad*" is an external war waged against someone who threatens Islam. The latter is compulsory for all believers when it is proclaimed by a properly constituted Islamic authority and only after the correct procedures have been observed. For the Sufi holy war is constant and compulsory in both its forms. This does not necessarily mean that a Sufi adept is required to conduct an open struggle against Soviet power, which is recognised as inherently evil, but it does mean that he must be psychologically ready for such a struggle should it arise. Some Soviet sources see such a conflict as inevitable.[4]

The zikr

The *zikr* is the principal ceremony of the Sufi brotherhood. "The brotherhood materialises in the *zikr*," notes one expert, ". . . which also forms the framework of the brotherhood . . . and serves as the pivot of mysticism."[5] Soviet anti-religious propaganda is targeted particularly on the *zikr*, which is thought by the propagandists to be one of Sufism's more odious aspects. It is frequently attacked as being anti-Soviet and anti-Russian, unhealthy, and anti-social. The reason for the latter criticism seems to be because adepts are unable to return to work immediately after a *zikr*, but as we shall see below, the *zikr* can assume what for Russians must be an undesirable political colouring.

The *zikr* ceremony consists of the regular recitation of litanies founded on the Quran, fixed phrases repeated in the mind or aloud in ritual order accompanied by a complicated technique of posture, breath control, and in some cases rhythmical movements.[6] Nearly all Soviet

4. Ibid.
5. S.J. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam* (Oxford, 1971), p. 194.
6. The Sufi practice of *zikr* can be compared to similar mystical practices, for example the brahmanist *zhapa-yoga*, the Japanese buddhist *shomyo*, and above all to the Christian Greek and Russian Orthodox technique of "the Jesus Prayer". According to St John Climachos, in the "prayer of one word" the name of Jesus

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specialists who have witnessed a *zikr* remark about its exceptional emotional and aesthetic quality. In the words of one:

> Religious hymns — the constant repetition of the same short prayer — lend the *zikr* an intense emotional colouring, they facilitate the psychic exaltation of the participants, strengthen their fanaticism and their religious passion. . . . After the ecstacy of the collective *zikr* with its emotional intensity, the after-*zikr* leaves the adepts feeling relaxed, purified and consoled.[7]

The following verses, collected by Mustafinov and translated into Russian — probably from the Chechen language original — are focused on death. They are probably of fairly recent origin:

THE RECITER:

When leaving this world of illusions,
When the tomb-keeper will knock at my door,
When my soul will take leave of my body,
Come to my defence, O blessed master.

THE CHOIR RESPONDS:

When, without desire, I shall descend into the tomb
Alone, without friends, who will abandon me,
When the redoubtable judges will begin their interrogation,
And I, unrepentant of my sins,
Become confused in my maladroit answers,
Come to my aid, O blessed master
And answer in my place.

The following version of the choir response is also used:

In this world of suffering, you remain unworried,
Without knowing what tomorrow will bring,
Your last hour is hidden
So prepare yourself to join your Creator.

Your hand brushes the hour of your death,
The jaws of the tomb are open under your feet,
So collect your thoughts, which are dispersed throughout the world,
And prepare yourself to join your Creator.

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must be united to the breath. See, among others, M.M. Anawati and Gardet, *Mystique Musulmane, aspects et tendences, expérience et techniques* (Paris, 1961).

7. M.M. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm i ego sotsial'naia sushchnost'* (Groznyi, 1971), p. 22.

Hard is the road you must travel,
Your last hour is imminent,
As long as the source of your speech exists,
Prepare yourself to join your Creator.[8]

The silent (or "inner" or "mental" *zikr*), is directed and controlled by a sheikh. Traditionally practised by the Naqshbandis,[9] other brotherhoods have recently adopted this form of *zikr* for security reasons under Soviet conditions.[10] The loud *zikr* may be accompanied by songs and dances and even by musical instruments. This form of *zikr* has traditionally been practised by Yasawis — with the exception of the Hairy Ishans, who practice a silent *zikr* — and the Qadiris. The Chim Mirza, an offshoot of the Qadiriya, employs drums during its *zikr*; the Vis Haji, another offshoot, employs violins. In exceptional instances, such as in the *zikr* of the Ata tribe of Turkmenistan, more violent practices ensue, for example walking on burning coals or inflicting wounds with swords. In some brotherhoods, special clothing is worn during the *zikr*; the most spectacular is probably the white fur hat worn by the Vis Haji, which has earned the name *beloshaposhniki* ("white hats") in Soviet sources. These practices have remained largely unchanged for the last half-millenium, with exceptions where noted above.

According to Soviet sources, *zikr* can have great popular appeal. For example, a Chechen anti-religious expert, who was completing research lasting several months in 1979, observed that in the village of Kurchaloy five *zikrs* occurred simultaneously: one Naqshibandiya *zikr*

8. Ibid., pp. 20-1.
9. E.T. Smirnov, *Dervishizm v Turkestane* (Tashkent, 1898), p. 20. In the beginning it seems that the Kubrawis practised the loud *zikr*, as did the Yasawis. It is under the influence of the Naqshbandis with whom they merged after the Russian conquest hat they adopted the silent *zikr*. See O.A. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent, 1960) pp. 52-3.
10. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki* op. cit.; S. Umarov, "Muridizm s blizkogo rasstoiania", *Nauka i Religiia*, no.10, 1979, pp. 30-2. In some areas a *zikr* is compulsory for important moments in family life even if there are no Sufi adepts in the family. This is so in the districts of Belokany, Zakataly and Kakh in Azerbaijan, which are inhabited mostly by Ingilois, or Georgian Muslims. See I.I. Datunashvili, "Materialy k kharakteristike sovremennogo sostoianiia religioznosti v Belokanskom, Zakatalskom i Kakhskom raiionakh (Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR)", in *Konkretnye issledovaniia sovremennykh religioznykh verovanii* (Moscow, 1967), p. 192.

and four Qadiriya *zikrs*. This expert noted with some chagrin that these Sufi events were of greater entertainment interest than three Soviet dancing parties and one socialist realist movie (which only had 10-15 viewers) which were taking place at that time.[11] This rare first-hand observation should convince Soviet propagandists that Sufism is not boring, at least not compared to the more routine "Soviet culture". A *zikr* can last for several hours[12] — or even several days, as often in the case of a funeral *zikr*.[13]

Soviet experts distinguish several categories of *zikr*. The first is the clandestine *zikr*, held in secret in the house of an adept. The audience is limited to the members of the brotherhood (usually 10-40 persons). Soviet experts believe that such *zikrs* cannot be in the pursuit simply of spiritual aims, and that they are in reality conspiratorial political meetings. The Hairy Ishans of the Ferghana valley practice this kind of *zikr*. Secondly, the Soviets identify a "semi-secret *zikr*". The adepts alone take part in this ceremony, but all members of the family or clan may assist as spectators. The Chechen Qadiris practice this *zikr*, which Soviet specialists regard as especially dangerous. Thirdly, Soviet sources identify a "semi-public *zikr*". All members of the family or clan take part in the ceremony, including children, official atheists and those who do not belong to the brotherhood. Anti-religious experts believe that this *zikr* is even more obnoxious than the "semi-secret *zikr*". It is practised by Naqshbandis of the North Caucasus. Finally, Soviet experts have recently pointed to a "public *zikr*", in which all inhabitants of a village may take part. The *zikr* loses its mystical religious character and becomes a folkloric survival. This kind of *zikr* is practiced currently by some Turkmen tribes.

Zikrs usually take place at least once a week, but at the family level — if at least one member of a family or clan is an adept[14] — they

11. Umarov, op. cit., pp. 30-2.
12. Kh. B. Mamleev, *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyi, 1970), p. 12; Mustafinov, *Zikrizm*, op. cit., p. 23; M.A. Abdullaev and M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), p. 182.
13. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm*, p. 23; S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady* (Ashkhabad, 1976), p. 157.
14. In the category of the semi-public clan *zikr*, we may cite the example of the "medical" *zikr* of the Ata tribe, one of the "holy" tribes of the Turkmen. This *zikr* is open to all members of the clan, including children above the age of 12 years but not to women, who may be spectators only. The acting performers are selected from among the most vigorous adepts and are directed by the *pata beriji*, an *ishan*

may take place on any occasion, for example at births, marriages, at house raisings, even when someone is drafted into the army.[15] *Zikrs* are frequently held at important Muslim festivals (Kurban-Bayram, Mawlud, Uraza-Bayram) and almost always during pilgrimages to holy places. Concerning the last, two Daghestani experts have written:

> Pilgrimage is the most powerful channel for religious influence. During the pilgrimage, religious rites are performed openly. *Zikrs* are held, fanatics indulge in open propaganda and launch maledictions against unbelievers. . . . Often phenomena of mass fanaticism and mass ecstasy take place. *Zikr* is performed by all pilgrims, believers and unbelievers, including young students, and it lasts for hours. People come from all corners of the republic [Daghestan] singing religious hymns . . . In some districts (Botlikh, Hasav-Yurt, Gumbetov) groups of fanatics [here adepts of the Vis Haji] organised public *zikrs*.[16]

Another Daghestani expert records an incident (1979) during the month of Ramadhan in northern Daghestan. A group of Vis Haji *murids* of the village of Kazbekovskoe, in the district of Hasav-Yurt, made a trip to the village of Gidatl' in the district of Gumbetov where they performed a public *zikr* "in an official place, being seen by local authorities and in the presence of children".[17] Other specialists point to the popular appeal of these ceremonies.[18]

There can be little doubt that Soviet authorities are concerned about the positive effects on Sufi recruiting which these public demonstrations have.[19] Other Soviet sources claim that the population

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who gives the blessing at the beginning of the *zikr*, several *hapyz* (for *hafez*) who are chosen for their beautiful voices and their knowledge of Sufi hymns, and the *shikh* (for sheikh) who directs the dances. The "medical" *zikr* has several shamanistic "witch-doctor" aspects, which may be a remnant of the Rifa'i brotherhood. This *zikr* would appear to have disappeared from Turkmenistan, the last performance probably taking place around 1946. See Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady*, pp. 155-9.

15. Ibid., p. 157.
16. Abdullaev and Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy*, op. cit., pp. 182-3.
17. S. Murtazalieva, "Bor'ba idei i svoboda sovesti", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 2, 1981, p. 55.
18. For more on this subject, see Demidov, *Turkmeskie Ovliady*, pp. 155-9, and V.N. Basilov, "O proizkhozhdenii Turkmen Ata (prostonarodnye formy sredne aziatskogo sufizma)", in *Domusul'manskie verovaniia i obridady v Srednei Azii* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 138-68.
19. Musafinov, *Zikrizm*, p. 25.

is intimidated into participating in at least some of these public occurrences.[20] But whether participation in public *zikrs* is voluntary — which is probable — or forced, this aspect of Sufi practice clearly has Soviet officials concerned about its possible political consequences.

Although Sufism is a special way of practising Islam, we should not be surprised, because of its history in the Russian empire and continuous Soviet attempts to destroy it, to find that certain political aspects have crept into its daily expression, including into the *zikr*. S. Umarov gives a detailed description of just such an evolution. He notes, for example, that in a Naqshbandiya *zikr*, which was formerly silent and internalised, in at least one village in the North Caucasus songs, hymns, and dialogue between the *murshid* and the the choir now occur which are remarkable for their nationalistic bias. Shamil and other Sufi heroes, remembered primarily for their resistance to the Russians, are envoked, and this experience, according to Umarov, "leaves a deep impression on all present, even on unbelievers".[21] Soviet authorities are not ambivalent about the practice of *zikr*, and have directed an intense anti-religious campaign against it. However, local officials appear less than enthusiastic about attacking the practice; indeed, many take part in it. Thus one sees, as so often in the Soviet Union, a lack of coordination between the centre and the periphery; one sees also, as the distances increase, a noticeable lack of cooperation on the part of native officials — even if they are Communist Party members — in implementing Moscow-inspired directives and initiatives that are unpalatable and unwanted. While these officials may be Party members, they are also natives. In the Caucasus and Central Asia this means that they might also be Sufis.

Sufism as a surrogate of official Islam

Sunni Islam is a religion without a regular ecclesiastical establishment. Contrary to what one observes in Shi'a countries, such as Iran, there is no Sunni "church", and no middlemen come between God and his creatures. Sunni clerics — mullahs, *imam-khatibs*, *qadi*, muftis, and so

20. Sh. Ismailov, "Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1982, p. 2.
21. S. Umarov, op. cit., pp. 30-2.

forth — are not "priests" in the Christian meaning of the term. Rather, the duty of Sunni clerics is to prevent the practice of Islam from relapsing into ignorance and superstition, and for this reason they act as its professional or semi-professional "technicians". Thus they know Arabic, are able to recite prayers and read the Quran, have at least a minimum knowledge of Shari'yat law, and are able to supervise the public and private Islamic rites, such as marriage, burial and circumcision.[22]

Official Islam in the Soviet Union is directed by four Muslim Spiritual Boards: at Tashkent, to serve Central Asia and Kazakhstan and also to serve as the international center of Soviet Islam; at Ufa for European Russia and Siberia; at Makhach-Qala for the North Caucasus and Daghestan; and at Baku for the Shi'a of the entire Soviet Union and for the Sunnis of Transcaucasia. These centers control fewer than 2,000 registered clerics,[23] who alone are empowered by the Soviet state to serve a Soviet Muslim community of 45 million, of whom at least 80 per cent observe some Islamic rites. Without doubt, this number is wholly inadequate to serve such a large religious community, as is the number of official mosques.

In 1917, on the eve of the Bolshevik Revolution, at least 25,000 mosques existed in the Russian Empire, (excluding the Emirate of Bukhara and the Khanate of Khiva), and their operation was not regulated. By 1942, following Stalin's pre-war onslaught against religion of all kinds in the Soviet Union, only 1,200 official mosques remained. This number was increased slightly after the Second World War, but in the wake of Khrushchev's anti-religious campaigns of the 1950s and 1960s it was again reduced, this time to less than 400.[24] By 1976, according to a Soviet source, this number had dwindled to 300 "registered" mosques, but the existence of 700 "unregistered" mosques was acknowledged.[25] Also in 1976, in an interview with a

22. For information concerning the observance of traditional Muslim rites and ceremonies, see A. Bazarov, *Nekotorye osobennostii puti formirovaniia ateisticheskogo mirovozreniia Tadzhikskogo dekhkanstva* (Dushanbe, 1971); J. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia naseleniia sotsialisticheskoi Karakalpakii* (Nukus, 1973), p. 50; N. Ashirov, *Musul'manskaia propoved'* (Moscow, 1978), p. 23; I. Dzhabarov, *Obshchestvennyi progreess, byt i religiia* (Tashkent, 1973), p. 82.
23. This figure is based on an estimation of four clerics for each "working" mosque.
24. *Spravochnik propagandista i agitatora* (Moscow, 1966), p. 149.
25. V. Furov, executive of the Council for Religious Affairs, Secret Report, presented at the Committee of the *Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*, reproduced in *Khronika Tekushchikh Sobytii*, no. 41, 1976, p. 7.

German newspaper, Abdullah Nurulaev, Vice-Chairman of the Council for Religious Affairs, spoke somewhat vaguely of "more than one thousand Muslim religious communities each with its own mosque".[26] This figure, if accurate, certainly includes the "unregistered" mosques noted in the same year in another source; in any case, it is likely that the number of "registered" mosques at the time Nurulaev spoke numbered no more than 400 for the entire Soviet Union.[27]

There are only two official Muslim educational institutions: the *medresseh* "Mir-i Arab" in Bukhara (opened in 1945), with approximately fifty students engaged in preparatory studies, and the *medresseh* "Imam Ismail al-Bukhari" in Tashkent (opened in 1971), with some 30 students engaged in advanced studies. Each year the official religious boards send a few students abroad to complete their studies in well-known Muslim universities, such as Al-Azhar in Egypt, Qarawiyin in Morocco and Al-Baidha in Libya. Given the fairly widespread retention of Islamic belief or practice in the Soviet Union, this official structure of clerics, mosques, and educational establishments can only be considered ridiculously inadequate, and it is in this planned inadequacy that one can glimpse one of the major tenets of official Soviet anti-religious policy: the conviction that when formal religious structures are abolished, religion will die for lack of feeding. Against Orthodoxy this strategy has had considerable success; when churches are closed the Orthodox community loses its magnetic centre. Against Islam, which has no rigid ecclesiastical hierarchy and for which the mosque is only a convenience rather than an end in itself, this type of offensive was and is destined to fail. Instead, Islam in the Soviet Union has developed along parallel, unofficial and unregulated lines — hence the Soviet-inspired catch-phrase "parallel Islam".

26. *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 4 May 1979.
27. Official figures for some Muslim territories area available which confirm that the total number of working mosques is certainly not more than 400: Tajikistan (1964), 18; Turkmenistan (1980), 4; Daghestan (1975), 27; Azerbaijan (1975), 16. For other regions we have only estimates. In Uzbekistan, for example, former head Mufti Babakhanov estimated that in 1980 there were in Central Asia as a whole 200 great mosques (*jami*) and an unknown number of small mosques (*masjid*); and in Uzbekistan there were some "100 great mosques and 500 small mosques". One suspects that these "small mosques" are of the unofficial variety. See *Nauka i Religiia*, January 1964, p. 22; M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), p. 179; Mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov, *Radio Moscow* in Arabic, 1 April 1979.

Parallel Islam is supported in all regions of the Soviet Muslim world by the constant activity of "unregistered" clerics of whom, not surprisingly, many — if not a majority — are members of Sufi brotherhoods.

Parallel Islam embraces purely religious, educational and social activities. Its "independent unregistered clerics" — a Soviet euphemism for Sufi adepts — perform basic religious rites (marriage, burial, circumcision), conduct prayers at the homes of believers, and preside at various festivals and occasions (anniversaries, house-raisings, school graduations, and so forth). They maintain clandestine and illegal houses of prayer where believers meet on Fridays and during the major Islamic festivals. Under Soviet law, these activities are reserved for the state-sponsored "official" clerics and mosques; therefore, those engaged in the practice of parallel Islam are always at risk.

If we believe Soviet sources, which have no reason to exaggerate the problem, then it is possible to conclude that parallel Islam is a dynamic force. Soviet sources frequently lament that the observance of Islamic rituals is not in decline but is in fact on the increase, including more frequent observance by respected Communist Party members. Dinmuhammed Kunaev, First Secretary of the Kazakhstan Communist Party and a member of the ruling Soviet Politburo, publicly pointed to what we can assume is a common example. Kunaev remarked during his speech in February 1981 to the Congress of his party on the case of one Baizhabaginov, also a member of the Communist Party and a representative of the Council for Religious Affairs for the Dzhezkazgan region. Although a man of responsible position, whose duties included leading the fight against Islamic "survivals" in his region, Baizhabaginov went on record asking his superiors at the Dzhezkagan *oblast'* committee to invite a mullah — perhaps an unregistered one — to officiate at the funeral of a relative. Kunaev also noted that the City Executive Committee of Dzhezkazgan (an important industrial centre) routinely invites mullahs to perform religious ceremonies.[28]

Information concerning the existence of clandestine mosques is abundant in Soviet published sources. These mosques appear to be especially numerous in areas where official mosques are few or non-existent. They fall into several categories: mosques which have been closed by Soviet authorities but which are reopened by "fanatics" and

28. *Kazakhstanskaiia Pravda*, 5 February 1981.

operated by unregistered mullahs;[29] prayer houses, which are established at or near the tombs of Sufi sheikhs or in the vicinity of working cemeteries — in Soviet parlance, "holy places";[30] "private" clandestine prayer houses, open to all believers, which are located at the homes of Sufi sheikhs and are therefore used as well as the meeting place (*khanaka*) for Sufi adepts;[31] and completely secret prayer houses for use only by members of a brotherhood.[32]

Since religious instruction is forbidden in Soviet schools, and classical Arabic is taught only at the university level, parallel Islam has quite naturally come to assume an educational as well as a religious role. There can be little doubt that this is a popular activity. A full-page article in *Sovet Özbekistoni* published on 26 September 1982 complained, for example, that an illegal "religious learning course" taught by a "false mullah" was attracting believers "as light attracts moths"; in this activity, we may assume that the Sufis are particularly important. Recent Soviet sources point to the existence of organised clandestine religious schools and Quran courses taught by "unregistered mullahs", "fanatics", "criminals", "crooks" and "parasites" — all of which expressions have been used frequently to designate Sufi adepts.[33] Saidbaev, for example notes the existence in the eastern part of the Ferghana valley (Osh region) of a "sect" which came into being specifically "to educate the younger generation in the spirit of Islam and to inculcate in them the principles of the Quran". This sect — probably a Sufi brotherhood — had in several places "organised collective courses in religious education".[34] In Tajikistan[35] and in Kirghizia[36] Sufis are identified openly as being responsible for

29. See, for example, G. Angutaev, "Aktivno, nastupatel'no", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1. 1975, pp. 18-24.
30. Several examples appear in I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, no. 3, 1967, pp. 164-85.
31. See, among many examples, A. Kadyrov, *Prichiny sushchestvovaniia i puti preodoleniia perezhitkov Islama* (Leninabad, 1966) and A. Safarov, *Bakimandanhoyi parastish-i eshanho* (Dushanbe, 1965).
32. Several examples of secret prayer houses reserved for "Hairy Ishans" are given in *Protiv religioznogo obmana i mrakobesiia* (Frunze, 1970).
33. See, for example, A. Kadyrov, p. 29, who writes: "The clerics have succeeded to organise religious schools in Leninabad, Kurgan-Tube, Kolkhozabad." He does not say if these are registered or unregistered clerics.
34. T.S. Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1978), p. 192 (fn.5).
35. A Safarov op. cit., pp. 7-8.
36. Cf. *Protiv religioznogo obmana i mrakobesiia*, op. cit., pp. 162-3.

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the establishment of religious and Quranic schools. Sources frequently record the widespread educational activity of the Batal Haji in Chechnia-Ingushetia,[37] the Naqshbandi in Daghestan,[38] and the Vis Haji in Chechnia and elsewhere.

On the social level, Soviet sources report on the apparently successful efforts by the Sufi brotherhoods to penetrate and control some traditional Muslim guilds,[39] some village assemblies, especially in the North Caucasus,[40] and clandestine clan courts, whose decisions are often more significant for local life than those of the local soviet organisations.[41] And in some regions of the North Caucasus, unregistered clerics are even establishing themselves as "social consultants".[42] Finally, especially in Central Asia, representatives of the Sufi brotherhoods enjoy considerable prestige as "healers".[43]

Sufi samizdat

Those who tend to underestimate the importance of Sufism in the Soviet Union often do so on the basis of a supposed absence of a Muslim Sufi underground literature, or *samizdat*. In fact, in recent years a growing number of references to a Sufi *samizdat* have appeared in the Soviet media. "Organised groups of fanatics" have been singled out for condemnation as a result of their reproducing religious texts. In some cases these "fanatics" are identified as *murids*.

More precise information is provided for Daghestan and the North

37. Cf. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (Stavropol, 1973), p. 98; and A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal-Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 23.
38. See, for example, A. Pakalov, "Zakon i obychai", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1974, opp. 43-7; and Sh. Ismailov, "Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 1, 1982, pp. 1-7.
39. See, among others, Saidbaev, pp. 183-4. Recently new guilds have appeared which are organised along traditional lines: taxi drivers in Tashkent (whose patron saint is the prophet Daud, or King David); medical workers (whose patron saint is Lukman); chemists (whose patron saint is the prophet Shish, or Seth). Women's guilds have grown up where formerly domestic activity has become commercial (rug, carpet and embroidery manufacture). See Kadyrov, pp. 42-3, who describes the coffee workers of Khanki and the barbers of Khiva.
40. Cf., for example, Angutaev, pp. 18-24.
41. Mamakaev, *Chechenskii taip* (Groznyi), pp. 78-9.
42. S. Murtazalieva, "Uchityvaia mestnye osobennosti", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 5, 1982, p. 46.
43. H.B. Paksoy, "The Deceivers", *Central Asian Survey*, Oxford, vol. 3, no. 1, 1984, pp. 129-30.

Caucasus by M.A. Abdullaev.[44] He mentions two collections (*sbornik*) in the Darghin language, "What a Muslim must know and what he must do" (*Chto dolzhen znat' i delat' Musulmanin*), based on the writings of a Naqshbandi sheikh, Abdurrahman Haji of Akhty, who wrote *The Basis of the Faith and of Religion* (*Usul ud-din wa'l-iman*) in Arabic, 1913) and *The Journey's Companion* (*Safar Yuldash*) a typical Sufi publication which describes the several stages (*maqamat*) of the "journeying to God" (*suluk*), ending for some Sufis with the "union with God". Both of these *samizdat* publications, according to Abdullaev, were composed "in our time" and are circulating in manuscript form. Abdullaev notes that these publications contain among other things an explanation of the difference between "External Faith" (*zahir* — "exoteric") and "Inner Faith" (*batin* — "esoteric"), which is typical of Sufi teaching. He moreover reproduces the "rules" of *murid* — that is, Naqshbandi — groups, "which play an obnoxious and reactionary role and poison the consiousness of our people". Among other clandestine publications mentioned by Abdullaev are numerous manuscripts (more than 130, he alleges) of a theological character in local languages, which reproduce books and pamphlets first published before the Revolution in Temir-Khan Shura (today Buynaksk) and in Kazan in Arabic and various Daghestani languages by Arab and Daghestani *ulema*, and spiritual songs. These publications "are circulating from hand to hand and they poison the consciousness of the people".[45]

Abdullaev reports on yet another form of religious Muslim *samizdat*: "letter-messages" (a collection of which exist in the Archives of the chair of philosophy of the Faculty of Natural Science of Daghestan State University) sent by conservative clerics to modernist clerics, in which the latter are accused and cursed for betraying Islam. Other clandestine "messages" circulating in the 1970s in Daghestan are attributed to Mekkan and Medina sheikhs.

In the Chechen-Ingush republic, Abdullaev mentions the existence of a *samizdat* publication produced by a group of "clerics" of the Nazran district which explains the "Ten rules of life" according to Islam.[46] These "clerics" could only have been Sufi adepts inasmuch as

44. M.A. Abdullaev, *Nekotorye voporsy teologii Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1973), pp. 105-6.
45. Ibid., p. 60.
46. Ibid., p. 61.

in the late 1960s and 1970s all the mosques in this republic remained closed. Moreover, the Nazran district in upper Ingushetia is the bastion of the Batal Haji *tariqa*. Even *Pravda* treated this breach of Soviet practice in a serious vein, noting on 22 March 1970 that this was a typical attempt by "religious fanatics . . . to oppose science and modern life".

M.M. Mustafinov[47] quotes the Russian translation (probably from the original Chechen language) of two Sufi hymns used by the Chechen Qadiris during their *zikr* (see pp. 79-80 above for an English translation). It is probable that these hymns are reproduced and distributed in *samizdat*. These beautiful and poetic songs are focused on death and are totally different from anything published by official Soviet poets. Commenting on their aesthetic and emotional quality, Mustafinov writes: "The performance of religious songs gives the *zikr* an emotional colouring . . . facilitates the psychic exaltation; the mystic content of the hymns strengthens fanaticism and religious passions. . . ."

More recently a Daghestani anti-religious expert, I.A. Makatov,[48] acknowledges the existence of a group of Daghestani "religious fanatics" (probably Naqshbandi adepts) who in 1974, in the village of Gergebil in Western Daghestan, tried to create a centre of pilgrimage at the tomb of Najmuddin of Hotso (Gotsinski). According to Makatov, "some of the fanatics, who were under the influence of the slanderous lies from foreign broadcasts [Radio Liberty and Radio Free Europe], have produced and propagated a religious text in which they tried to resuscitate the memory of the 'saint' Gotsinski."

Again in Daghestan, S. Murtazalieva[49] identifies the existence of curious *samizdat* chain letters circulating in schools. Young pupils were duplicating in manuscript from a religious text on "the coming of the Prophet and on the necessity of prayers". Murtazalieva adds that "because of the permissiveness of parents and also of pedagogical collectives, some children were dutifully reproducing and distributing these leaflets." The same phenomenon of chain letters exists in Central Asia, and several Soviet sources have linked it to the activity of "self-

47. M.M. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm i ego sotsial'naia sushchnost'* (Groznyi, 1971), p. 21.
48. I.A. Makatov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Moscow, 1978).
49. S. Murtazalieva, "Uchityvaia mestnye osobennosti", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 5, 1982, p. 47.

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appointed mullahs''.[50] In Kazakhstan, the local Komsomol newspaper *Leninshil Zhas*[51] describes such a ''chain'' in the Chimkent region, noting that it originated in the town of Turkistan — a traditional centre of the Yasawiya brotherhood. In Kirghizia, Shamshi Bazarbaev in a book *Uy-bulo zhana din* (Family and Religion),[52] gives the full text of a Muslim chain letter then circulating in the schools of the Suzak district and of the city of Kok-Zhangak. Bazarbaev explains the existence of the chain letter by referring to ''self-appointed mullahs.'' In Turkmenistan, an *agitpropshchik* G. Khidirov mentions the existence of several chains of ''sacred letters'' in different parts of the republic. According to Khidirov, some students at the Turkmen State University were among those who copied the letters in manuscript with a typewriter and even in typeset.

More recently still, a Tashkent newspaper *Sovet Özbekistoni*[53] printed an article which dealt with a major *samizdat* scandal in Tashkent.[54] According to the article, a group of eleven ''fanatical crooks'' have been printing clandestinely and distributing on a large scale ''thousands of copies'' of a pamphlet in Arabic and Uzbek. This pamphlet, ''Islam dini haqida'' (About the Islamic Faith), advises believers to avoid contact with ''non-believers'' (which implies with communists and Russians). Furthermore, it contains a selection of texts from the mystical poets Abu Ali Sina, Bedil and Alishir Navoi, the latter two of whom were Naqshbandi *murids*. The article does not say that the perpetrators of this crime belong to the Naqshbandiya, but considering their selection of texts it is probably.[55] In Turkmenistan, a region where the Sufi brotherhoods appear to be more active than in any of the other Central Asian republics, E. Dollaeva, Secretary of the Ashkhabad Regional Committee (*raikom*) of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, in a warning to her comrades about the dangers of lowering the quantity or quality of atheistic propaganda in factories and other places of work, writes: ''Believers try to distribute religious

50. See, for example, Timur Kocaoglu, ''Muslim Chain Letters in Central Asia'', *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, RL 313/83, 18 Aug. 1983.
51. 23 July 1983.
52. Shamshi Bazarbaev, *Uy-bulo zhana din* (Frunze, 1973).
53. G. Khidirov, ''Adamga oglan yagshi'', *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 27 Jan. 1980.
54. ''Firibgarlar,'' *Sovet Ozbekistony*, 26 Sept. 1982. This article is analysed by H.B. Paksoy, ''The Deceivers'', *Central Asian Survey*, vol. 3, no. 1. 1984, pp. 123-31.
55. See Bess Brown, ''Profitable Unofficial Religious Publishing Operation Uncovered in Tashkent'', *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, 20 Oct. 1982.

sermons and admonitions [she does not specify in what form] when atheistic propaganda and education are relaxed.''[56]

It is probable that these limited data, which imply that Muslim-published *samizdat* is not widespread, do not give an accurate picture of a reality that is more diversified and which Soviet authorities obviously see as a threat. A Daghestani anti-religious *agitpropshchik* S. Murtazalieva notes, ''We cannot tolerate cult servants and religious businessmen [*del'tsy ot religii*] propagating religious literature which leads to the enrichment of the Church and of the clerics.''[57]

Soviet legislation in Central Asia confirms the existence of a religious *samizdat*. For example Article 3 of Decree no. 65 of the Council of Ministers of the Uzbek SSR (7 February 1969) entitled ''On the Strengthening of Legislation Concerning Religious Cults''[58] directs the Ministry of Interior of the Uzbek SSR ''to reinforce its activity in order to discover and to put an end to the crimes of a religious character, to put an end to the selling and the distribution of religious literature (photocopies of sermons, fragments of the Quran, recordings of religious poems and songs, etc.) . . .'' Chapter III of the Appendix to the same decree establishes a Special Commission attached to the Central Executive Committee of the Soviets of the Uzbek SSR, which is responsible for control over religious organisations; the latter are strictly forbidden ''to publish and propagate religious or any other literature where it is opposed to the established rules.''[59]

Finally, it is becoming increasingly evident that written Muslim *samizdat*, whether published or in manuscript form, represents only part of all Sufi *samizdat*. Soviet sources have begun to denounce what appears to be the extensive use by the brotherhoods of transistor radios, cassettes and recordings. Several examples of recorded *samizdat* are given by A.M. Tutaev. In this work, Tutaev examines the use of recordings by adepts of the Batal Haji *wird* in the Chechen-Ingush Republic.[60] In an earlier survey Tutaev explained that Soviet radio facilities have been used by adepts of the Batal Haji *tariqat* to broadcast

56. *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 25 May 1983.
57. S. Murtazalieva, ''Bor'ba idei i svoboda sovesti'', *Sovetskii Dagestan*, no. 2, 1982, p. 54.
58. *Zakonodatel'stvo o religioznykh kul'takh* (Moscow, 1971), p. 231. This document is marked *dlia sluzhebnogo pol'zovaniia* (''For official use only'').
59. Ibid., p. 236.
60. A.M. Tutaev, *Protiv sektanskogo bezzakoniia* (Groznyi, 1975).

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religious preaching.[61] This curious incident took place in the Chechen village of Ekazhevo in 1967 or 1968. (In this work, Tutaev also mentions school-age boys who are engaged in circulating religious messages and manuscripts). Another Chechen anti-religious specialist N.A. Mamleev describes the use of tape recorders and recordings of religious texts by adepts of the Batal Haji and Kunta Haji *tariqa*.[62] In order to protect the secret, those involved would fill one side of the record with popular songs, while on the other they recorded religious hymns and sermons.

The importance of recordings in Muslim activities in general and in Sufi activities in particular has been underlined by the Mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov of Tashkent in a *fetwa* in answer to a question from a Daghestani Muslim published in *Muslims of the Soviet East*. The Mufti writes:

> The purpose of creating a human being by the Almighty God was to present him with beliefs of every kind . . . to make full use of all technical progress including the ability to listen to radio, tape recordings . . . If this serves to increase the knowledge of the faithful . . . then such actions are readily welcomed by God. While, on the other hand, if such means are used for propagating falsehood . . . then this is entirely contradictory to the just ideals of Islam.[63]

Soviet officials increasingly indicate their awareness of the possibility that Soviet Muslims might become infected by Islamic fundamentalism from abroad, especially from Iran and Afghanistan.[64] In this context it is revealing that the Soviet Central Asian press has begun to acknowledge the appearance in Central Asia of Islamic books, documents and manuscripts which clearly originate from the southern border region, especially from Afghanistan.[65] This trend, if it continues, could make Soviet efforts to control the proliferation of forbidden materials within Soviet borders considerably more difficult.

61. A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 23.
62. N.A. Mamleev, *Reaktsionnaia sushchnost' muridizm* (Groznyi, 1962), pp. 36-7.
63. *Muslims of the Soviet East,* no. 1, 1981, pp. 14-15.
64. Two recent articles give substantial evidence of the spillover of Islamic ideas into the Soviet Muslim regions. See Yaacov Ro'i, "The Impact of the Islamic Fundamentalist Revival of the Late 1970s on the Soviet View of Islam", in Yaacov Ro'i (ed.), *The USSR and the Muslim World* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), and Alexandre Bennigsen, "Mullahs, Mujahidin and Soviet Muslims", *Problems of Communism*, vol. 33, no. 6 (Nov.-Dec. 1984).
65. See, for example, M. Abdyldaev, "Za shirmoi Islama", *Sovetskaia Kirgiziia*, 30 June 1984.

Holy places

The cult of Sufi saints is probably the most important element of popular Islam in Central Asia and the Caucasus. Indeed the veneration of a saint is an act of collective faith and piety in which not only Sufi adepts but indeed any believers — women, children, peasants and nomads, members of the intelligentsia and city workers — and even non-believers may participate. Sufis in the Soviet Union control and maintain holy places, which are the basis for the cult of saints. Because of this strategic position, Sufis have unique and unlimited access to non-adepts who observe the cult of saints. They stand, therefore, at the critical juncture where popular belief meets clandestine organisation, where ordinary Muslims come into contact with the highly motivated and rigidly disciplined Sufis. Compared to Russian propagandists who seek to destroy Islam but come from the outside, the Sufis, who seek to strengthen Islam and, more importantly, to strengthen individual Muslims in their belief, come from Soviet popular Islam's very centre. The relative advantage this confers upon the Sufi organisations should not be underestimated, as Soviet sources point out.

Soviet sources testify explicitly that today, more than ever, the Sufi brotherhoods' activity is centred around holy places (*ziyarat, mazar, pir gumbez*), which are usually the tombs of real Sufi sheikhs or, less frequently, of some more or less mythical individual who has been co-opted by the Sufis: clan or tribal ancestors, Biblical prophets, even imaginary beings (often pre-Islamic deities of Zoroastrian or, rarely, of Buddhist origin). Soviet anti-religious specialists have been trying unsuccessfully for years to unmask their non-Islamic character. Such efforts are destined from the beginning to be in vain, because the popularity of a holy place does not depend on the authenticity of the saint buried there.

Already in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the adepts of the *tariqa* had taken possession of most holy places in the North Caucasus and Central Asia, notwithstanding their origin and the authenticity of the venerated personage. The guardian of the holy place is usually a sheikh or a senior *murid* of a brotherhood; in this way the shrine replaces the *khanaqa*, which is forbidden by Soviet legislation. Often a clandestine *mektep* (Muslim primary school) is attached to the *mazar*, which also serves as the place where the *zikr* is held. Soviet sources agree that during a pilgrimage, the holy place is the main contact place

between the "Sufi fanatics" and the population — believers and unbelievers alike. If the holy personage enjoys a special national prestige, this usually enhances the popularity of the shrine and consequently opportunities for contact between Sufis and non-Sufis. Collective prayers are organised during the pilgrimage, and Sufi adepts indulge in intense religious and political activities.

Soviet experts describe the holy places as "centres of obscurantism, fanaticism and reaction" from where nationalist propaganda and religious hatred are directed to the population. But Soviet specialists argue that holy places are more than "breeding grounds for charlatans, crooks, parasites and criminals": they are unsanitary as well. According to Bazarbaev,

> The holy places attract all kinds of persons, including those who have venereal or skin diseases, trachoma etc. . . . The pilgrims eat in the same place, drink from the same pail, sleep in the same beds and make ritual ablutions in the same plates. Some pilgrims bring with them bedding belonging to the diseased. All that creates favourable conditions for the propagation of contagious illness.[66]

Since the late 1950s, holy places have been a main target in anti-Islamic propaganda. It is around the holy *mazars*, tangible places which can be destroyed and liquidated, that the authorities have decided to conduct the main offensive against religious survivals in the Muslim republics. Although periodically closed by the authorities, demolished, or turned into anti-religious museums, clubs or "parks of culture", the holy places very soon spring up again. The Soviet anti-religious literature of the last fifty years reveals that most holy places closed in the 1930s or the '50s during the two great anti-religious campaigns are still working. The Daghestani anti-religious expert I.A. Makatov gives two examples of the difficulties encountered by the local authorities when they attack holy places, especially the tombs of Sufi ancestors: "It necessitates caution and tact, a serious educational preparation", otherwise a measure imposed from above might cause irreparable harm:

> In 1963 the believers of the village of Ullubiy aul in Daghestan, had decided to repair, at their own expense, the local *ziyarat*. One year later, the local authorities destroyed it, but very rapidly the believers built a new holy place

66. Zh. Bazarbaev, *Opyt sotsiologicheskogo izucheniia ateizma i religii* (Nukus, 1979), p. 96, fn. 95.

and continued to pray there. Such brutal arbitrary measures can only complicate the already difficult campaign against the cult of saints. . . . In some districts of Daghestan and Chechnia the authorities commit a dangerous error when they imagine that the struggle against holy places can be reduced to one short campaign, and forget that when the closing up of a *mazar* is not accompanied by a serious scientific atheist explanation, the "clerics" will restore it at the very first opportunity.

Makatov quotes the opinion of Kh. Bachagaev, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Soviets of the district of Vedeno (Chechen-Ingush ASSR) who wrote in *Groznenskii Rabochii* (23 December 1964):

> In 1960 the assemblies (*Jama'at*) of the villages of Pervomaisk, Dysh-Vedeno and Tsa-Vedeno asked [the authorities] to close the *ziyarat* of Uzun Haji and of the mother of Kunta Haji. Years later pilgrims still continue to visit these holy places, especially during the religious festivals. They come not only from all the districts of our republic, but also from all other republics and autonomous regions of North Caucasus and even from the mountain areas of Georgia.[67]

Sometimes a long-deserted holy place can regain its prestige and become once again an active centre of pilgrimage. It is not coincidental in this regard that the tombs of the Sufi sheikhs who fought the Russians have enjoyed the most spectacular recoveries in recent years. For example, in 1978 I.A. Makatov described the efforts of "religious fanatics manipulated by foreign ideological centres" who organised a new pilgrimage to the tomb of the imam Najmuddin of Hotso, the Naqshbandi *murshid* described earlier, who together with Uzun Haji led the great Daghestani uprising of 1920-1 and was executed by the Bolsheviks in 1925.[68]

The location of holy places in the territory of the Muslim republics represents a kind of "religious geography" of nationalism which can be charted according to the location of the Sufi brotherhoods. Not surprisingly, this "geography" centres on those places where Islam is stronger than anywhere else in the Soviet Union: where the holy places, and hence the brotherhoods, are located. Today more than ever, Muslim holy places controlled by the Sufi brotherhoods, and not

67. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1967), pp. 179-80.
68. I.A. Makatov, *Atiesty v nastuplenii* (Moscow, 1978), pp. 116-7.

the few officially sanctioned "working mosques", are the real spiritual centres of Islam in the Soviet Union. *Agitprop* specialists are indeed correct to focus their attention on the territories near *mazars*; it is here that the fight between atheism and faith is taking place.

Predictably, Soviet leaders attribute the strength of parallel Islam, as manifested by the existence and growth of holy places, to outside agencies. Thus in a recent article devoted to the "dangerous manoeuvres of the imperialists", the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, M.N. Gapurov, pointed out that holy places controlled by the Sufi sheikhs and "other religious charlatans" are "one of the most obnoxious survivals of the past which are utilised by the imperialists".[69]

One ploy by the regime to preempt the opening of new holy places is to place potential sites under state supervision before they come to the attention of the Sufis. When analysing the situation of holy places in Daghestan and in the Chechen-Ingush republic, I.A. Makatov observes with satisfaction that out of the 3,000 historical monuments registered by the local Society for the Protection of Monuments of History and Culture, 1,000 are placed under the control of the government and "this preserves the cultural heritage of the Caucasus but also helps to use these monuments for educational, patriotic and anti-religious purposes".[70] But too strict control over holy places can be counterproductive; for example, while Makatov describes with some pleasure the transformation into anti-religious museums of the ancient mosques of the village of Akhty in South Daghestan and of the cathedral mosque of Ordzhonikidze, the capital town of Ossetia, noting that these buildings represent "the reactionary role of Islam in the life of the North Caucasus",[71] he is less pleased to discover that the mosque of Kumukh — a masterpiece of Arab art of the eighth century — is now being used as a warehouse. And in 1975 when another masterpiece, the medieval mosque of Qala-Qureish in Central Daghestan, was demolished, Sufis quickly endowed it with a kind of martyrdom. Makatov recognises that this decision was a disastrous one, and that to protest against it believers have illegally reopened the mosque and are using it as a holy place of pilgrimage.[72]

69. M.N. Gapurov, "Naveki v sem'e edinnoi", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 25 Jan. 1983.
70. I.A. Makatov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii*, op. cit., p. 93.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 94.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 95.

Soviet inability to put an end to the veneration of holy places is explained by one of the most perceptive Soviet experts on Islam in Central Asia, T.S. Saidbaev:

> Formerly in Central Asia, the pilgrimage to the local holy places was the traditional form of human relations. Today it is still going on, though on a smaller scale. Some holy places have disappeared or have lost their sacred character, but the pilgrims are still coming, in summer and autumn, especially during the months of Muharrem and Ramadhan. The following fact shows the power of the tradition in the preservation of religious survivals: several mausoleums of sovereigns and religious chiefs venerated as saints and of great artistic value have been placed under State control. Some of them have been transformed into anti-religious museums, such as the tomb of Bahautdin Naqshband (founder of the Naqshbandiya) near Bukhara, the mausoleum of Shah-i Zenda in Samarkand, and several others; but the pilgrimages go on. Often pilgrimage takes place under the pretext of a touristic visit because holy places are usually located in picturesque areas. In this case, the touristic trip is accompanied by offerings and prayers.[73]

A good illustration of the fight going on around holy places between the huge Soviet *agitprop* machine and the Sufis is provided by an article published in April 1982 in *Turkmenskaia Iskra* (Ashkhabad). After describing the current condition of the most famous monument in the Turkmen republic, the mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar, the journalists conclude:

> It is high time to put some order in the mausoleum and to make the expression "under the protection of the State" a reality and not only a pious wish. To begin with, we must prohibit any privately conducted visits to the monument and expel all kinds of "sheikhs", "prophets" and "preachers" who organise ceremonies which have nothing to do with historical monuments.[74]

The authors of that article, which is focused on Sufism, do not specify what kind of ceremonies are taking place in the mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar, but they are probably referring to public *zikrs*.

In Appendix A we present a list of the currently "working" holy places.

73. S.T. Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo — opyt istoriko — sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia* (Moscow, 1978), pp. 209-10.
74. B. Yablokov and Yu. Yulin, "Sharlatany", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 3 April 1982.

Political and social activity of the Sufi brotherhoods

This aspect of the activity of the brotherhoods is the most difficult to analyse, because Soviet sources are scarce and strongly biased. However, during the last ten to fifteen years, Sufi *tariqa* have been the main target of anti-religious propaganda, especially in the North Caucasus (Daghestan and Chechen-Ingush ASSR), Turkmenistan and Kirghizia. It is through the attacks of the Soviet press against the "criminal activity of the Sufis" that we get at least a superficial picture of the social and political activity of the brotherhoods.

The accusations against the Sufis may be classified in three main categories.

Sufism is intellectually and socially dangerous. The Sufis are accused of intolerant fanaticism, social backwardness and intellectual obscurantism. Certainly other groups in Soviet life are castigated in a similar way from time to time, but one cannot mistake the aggressive tone with which Sufis are attacked, a tone remarkable both for its profound rancour and its hint of helplessness. For example:

> The wandering mullahs, ishans, Sufis etc. are extremely conservative and oppose all progressive change in the life of our people.[75]

> Sufism represents the most reactionary trend in Islam. In Sufism religion takes the coarsest, the most primitive form of intellectual obscurantism. The Sufis practice the most backward, barbaric rites and they favour the most brutal religious oppression. Sufism poisons the mind of our citizens with religious opium.[76]

> The rule of the Sufi brotherhoods (in this case the North Caucasian Qadiris), reflect the spirit of the most extreme fanticism.[77]

> [After a *zikr* ceremony], an adept is unfit for normal working activity.[78]

> [Zikrist] brotherhoods are the most fanatical, the most reactionary and the most obnoxious [organisations in our country].[79]

75. T. Izimbetov, *Kurs lektsii po osnovam nauchnogo ateizma* (Nukus, 1979), p. 81.
76. O.A. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent 1960), p. 58.
77. I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy Amaiia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Makhach-Qala, 1965), p. 18.
78. M.M. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm i ego sotsial'naia sushchnost'* (Groznyi, 1971), p. 24.
79. Ibid., p. 4

[Sufi] rituals are the most nefarious of all social evils, and it is necessary to fight [Sufi organisations] until their final extermination.[80]

The catalogue of such accusations may be extended *ad infinitum*. They are not really original, and closely resemble attacks launched against Jewish Hassidism, the Baptist *Initsiativniki*, the Jehovah's Witnesses, or the *Istinno Pravoslavnye Khristiane*. Moreover, the religious fanticism of the Sufis cannot in itself be considered a threat to Soviet society. All Soviet anti-religious experts agree on this point, but as Abdullaev and Vagabov point out: "Fanaticism is dangerous because it may lead to an explosion of religiosity among the masses, and this may give birth to real criminal activity."[81]

We believe that for Soviet authorities the social danger of Sufism lies elsewhere, although the anti-religious experts are not eager to denounce this particular aspect of parallel Islam: militant religious radicalism, represented by the Sufi order, sanctifies the traditional Muslim way of life, with its exaggerated respect for elders, its sexual taboos, and its family and clan solidarity. As such it represents a significant, perhaps the greatest, obstacle to the process of "getting nearer" (*sblizhenie*) of Soviet peoples and to the assimilation of the Muslims by the Russians (*sliyanie*); at the very least, militant Islam retards the "sovietisation" of large numbers of Soviet Muslims.

More ominous and weighty are the denunciations of the illegal and even criminal activity of the Sufi brotherhoods, more specifically such crimes as polygamy and the payment of *kalym*, which are supposedly practised or favoured by the adepts of the brotherhoods; plundering of collective property,[82] blackmail, physical violence exercised against the adversaries of the *tariqa*,[83] banditry, manslaughter and terrorism perpetrated against native Communists.[84] The accusations of violence

80. Ibid, p. 25.
81. M.A. Abdullaev and M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), p. 183.
82. Kh. Mamleev, *Reaktsionnaia sushchnost' muridizma* (Groznyi, 1966), p. 24, writes about the Batal Haji brotherhood: "Plundering and illegal acquisition (of land) are considered by them as normal acts, like buying or selling." A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968), p. 21, adds: "The leaders of the *tariqa* give their blessing to the *murids* to plunder socialist property."
83. Cf. A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta*, op. cit., pp. 4-5.
84. I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy*, op. cit., p. 19, mentions a trial in Daghestan in 1964 of a group of *murids* of the Amaiia brotherhood, an offshoot of the Naqshbandiya. M.M. Mustafinov, *Zikrizm*, op. cit., p. 36, quotes the crimes

are aimed mainly at the Qadiri groups in the North Caucasus (especially the Batal Haji *wird*) and at the Hairy Ishans in the Ferghana valley. The most typical example of supposed "Sufi banditism" was given in January 1981 in a curious article published in the journal *Zhurnalist* by a certain Dimitri Bezuglyi, editor of the newspaper *Groznenskii Rabochi*, describing the pressure exercised by "reactionary sectarians" on the population of the North Caucasus.

> An important part of the population is still under the strong influence of the Muslim religion. Certain clerics and sectarians, playing on the confusion between religious and national feelings, inflame fanaticism and xenophobia. . . . Under the influence of the so-called "religious authorities", fanatics bully and persecute Russian teachers and other representatives of our intelligentsia.

To illustrate this pressure, Bezuglyi gives an astounding example of religious terrorism:

> A few years ago a "fascist", one of those traitors who during the last war tried to stab Soviet power in the back, was killed in the mountains of Checheno-Ingushetia by MVD units. This bandit, Khasaki Magomedov, had killed forty Communists, Soviet activists and members of the Komsomol. *Groznenskii Rabochi* described his activity in an article called "Under the Shadow of the Quran" (because the bandit wore a miniature Quran on his chest) and asks the following question: "How was it possible that a Hitlerite bandit could survive for thirty years . . . sowing death and terror?" *Groznenskii Rabochi* explains it by the traditional "collective solidarity" (*krugovaiia poruka*) of the Chechens. A number of people knew the bandit, but covered up for him because it would have been a shameful violation of the traditional hospitality of the mountaineers to betray anyone to the authorities, even a killer.[85]

The activity of the *abrek* (bandit of honour), who, though an old man, terrorised the country for more than thirty years, must be understood against the religious background of the Chechen-Ingush country. It is tempting to believe that the terrorist was a typical representative of one of the "bandit Sufi orders" often denounced in the Soviet sources, possibly a member of the radical Batal Haji. In this case, the protection given to him by the population may be explained

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committed in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR in the 1970s by the adepts of an order of bandit-dervishes (*dervishi grabiteli*).

85. Dimitri Bezuglyi, "S pozitsii boitsa", *Zhurnalist* (Moscow), no. 1, 1981, pp. 46-8.

not so much by a medieval tradition of hospitality, but by a much stronger religious solidarity.[86]

However, despite numerous examples of criminal actions committed by Sufi adepts quoted in the Soviet sources, the accusations of banditry, violence and terrorism seem to be greatly exaggerated. Criminal offences are certainly committed from time to time by the most "fanatical" *murids*, especially in Chechnia and Daghestan, but it is unlikely that they are frequent; they certainly cannot destabilise the situation in the Muslim republics. They serve rather as a pretext to the Soviet authorities to exercise constant pressure against the brotherhoods.

More relevant are the two other categories of accusations levelled at the Sufi brotherhoods, because they represent a real and not an imaginary danger of destabilisation of those areas where Sufi organisations can influence public opinion:

(1) *The Sufi brotherhoods are the breeding ground of the most radical form of nationalism and nurseries of anti-Russian and anti-communist xenophobia.* Sufi activities and their influence may be compared to the role played by the Russian Old Believers in the preservation of Russian national identity. Sufi *tariqa* also represent the innermost, the purest, the most unyielding element of Muslim national identity, but in contrast to the Old Believers, whose role today is a purely negative and passive one, Sufi brotherhoods are highly dynamic, and their defence of the national traditions, customs and way of life is aggressive and offensive.

> The ideologues of present day *muridism* are using national traditions, national customs and the national feelings of the believers in order to expand Islam among the younger generation . . . Their activity is not limited [to purely religious matters], they are trying to gain control over the family structure [of the Muslim population]. . . . They are an obstacle to the internationalist education of the Chechens and the Ingush . . . They present Islam as the warden of national morals and of national cultural values . . . A negative attitude towards religion, "the faith of our ancestors", therefore appears to them as national treason.[87]

86. "The secrecy surrounding the adepts of the Batal Haji brotherhood creates among the population a sense of superstitious dread; tales circulating in Chechnia present the Batal Haji as servants of Iblis [Satan] protected by demons [*jinns*]" (Kh. V. Mamleev, *Reaktsionnaia sushchnost' Muridizma*, Groznyi, 1966).
87. V.G. Pivovarov, "Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia problem byta, natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 317-18.

Another Soviet specialist, Ostroushko, comes to the same conclusion when he describes the insidious activity of Turkmen ''clerics'' of the Mary *oblast* (the expression ''clerics'' can only designate the Sufi adepts because there are only two small village mosques left in the Mary region, with all together not more than ten clerics):

> They [the clerics] speculate on the religious feelings of the Turkmens, especially the young people, who are unable to distinguish the national from the religious.[88]

The Sufi brotherhoods not only promote the awakening of national feelings, they also benefit from it:

> [In the North Caucasus] the symbiosis [between nationalist and religious survivals] strengthens these survivals and makes them more viable. Muslim clerics and the leaders of *murid* brotherhoods in Daghestan and in the Chechen-Ingush republics understand this situation very well. By every possible means they try to consolidate these ties, to give a religious colouring to nationalism and a national meaning [*soderzhanie*] to religious feelings.[89]

And in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR:

> The *murid* brotherhoods . . . are responsible for inter-ethnic hostility . . . they support various obnoxious customs, such as vendetta, polygamy, etc . . . presenting them as national traditions.[90]

Klimovich, draws the following conclusion:

> The leaders of the *murid* brotherhoods and the elders — heads of families and clans — propagate among the believers, especially the younger generation, the idea that the veneration of the chiefs of the *murid* movement and the

88. L. Ostroushko, ''Boevye zadachi partiinykh organizatsii'', *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow, 1976), p. 87.
89. I.A. Makatov *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Moscow, 1978), p. 32, quoting a decision of the tenth plenum of the Chechen-Ingush *obkom* of the CPSU condemning ''the fanatical religious elements [*riannye religiozniki*] and the sectarians [Sufis] who speculate on the confusion between the religious and the natinal feelings of the population, especially of its politically backward part, in order to aggravate religious fanaticism and inter-ethnic hostility.''
90. Filimonov, ''Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia problem preodoleniia religii v sel'skoi mestnosti — Itogi, problemy, perespektivy'', *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1974), p. 80. Kh. Bokov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Groznyi, 1968), pp. 33-4, adds: ''It happens often that our intellectuals advise the militant atheists to avoid hurting the national feelings of the population and to abstain from attacking its customs and traditions.''

observance of religious rites and customs are the very symbol of nationalism and the guarantee of family and clan honour and of the national survival.[91]

Soviet sources go into little detail when they analyse the symbiosis between the national and the spiritual elements in the practice of the Sufis. Most agree, however, that the uninterrupted Sufi message to the larger Muslim population is distinguished by its strongly anti-Communist and anti-Russian character; moreover, Soviet specialists lament that the Sufis are successful in bringing this message to both the intellectuals and to the masses.

Sufis are denounced for encouraging Muslims, believers and non-believers alike, to isolate themselves from the Russians, to refuse to learn Russian, and to avoid all Soviet organisations dominated by the Russians such as the Komsomol, the Pioneers, the Communist Party, the trade unions (*profsoiuz*), and so forth.[92] One Soviet observer attributes the Sufis' rejection of outside, "contaminating" contacts to foreign propaganda.

> In recent years the imperialists have been trying to introduce into the Soviet Union a fashionable little theory [*teoretiku*] proclaiming the necessity of rejecting uniformity. This petty bourgeois, anarchic concept . . . proclaims the primacy of individual freedom. . . . It may also be applied to the religious sphere. According to this theory, a believer is responsible to God alone, and because the government — the Soviet government, not a bourgeois power — does not come from God, because it limits God's will, it must not be obeyed. This theory is propagated by some radical *murid* elements in Daghestan and Chechnia.[93]

Sufis are further accused of teaching their followers — who in turn influence the general Muslim population — to resist Soviet rule, to unite against those who are hostile to Islam,[94] and to be prepared to

91. L. Klimovich, "Bor'ba ortodoksov i modernistov v Islame", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1966), p. 85.
92. See among others A.V. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (Stavropol, 1973), p. 100, and I.A. Makatov, *Religioznye gruppy Amaiia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Makhach-Qala, 1965), pp. 15-6, 19.
93. I. Aliaskerov, "Sovremennaia ideologicheskaia bor'ba i religiia", *Sovetskii Dagestan* (Makhach-Qala, 1973), p. 37.
94. K. Shulembaiev in *Komsomol'skaia Pravda* (Moscow, June 1983), answering a letter of a Kazakh worker, T. Sulimkhanov, concerning Western propaganda and Islam in the Soviet Union.

wage a holy war against the communists:[95] to redirect historical animosities from the tsarist conquerors toward the communists.[96]

> The propaganda of the *murids* [the Chechen-Ingush Qadiris] is militant and it smells of holy war ideas [*slegka otdaiet Gazavatskimi ideikami*]. At the beginning of a collective prayer preceeding a *zikr*, a Kunta Haji preacher invites his followers to strengthen their faith. Sooner or later, he said, Islam will be established all over the world. It may be necessary to die for our faith to gain a place in Paradise . . . atheistic propaganda is only a temporary trial, through which God chooses those Chechens and Ingush who are true believers.[97]

We have found only a few references to Sufi propaganda in favour of the political independence of the Muslim territories, but while total independence is certainly the ultimate dream of all conservative Muslims (and probably of many non-conservatives), it is doubtful that anyone, even the most outspoken adversaries of the Soviet regime, can take such dreams seriously — for the time being at least. It is clear that by accusing the brotherhoods of weakening Soviet defences, the authorities are trying to attribute even more crimes to the Sufis, which is useful for preparing the ground for a future crackdown.[98]

Soviet accusations appear more credible when they accuse Sufi brotherhoods of fanning anti-Russian xenophobia through the exaltation of those "great ancestors" who fought the Russians in the nineteenth century and the Soviets in the twentieth. As noted above,

95. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze*, op. cit., p. 100, quoting *Groznenskii Rabochi*, Groznyi, 22 May 1968, on the adepts of Vis Haji.
96. Ibid, p. 35.
97. Idem. Another Soviet anti-religious specialist, S. Murtazalieva (in "Bor'ba idei i svoboda sovesti", *Sovetskii Dagestan*, 1981, p. 53), notes "the frankly nationalistic character of the preachings during *zikr* ceremonies".
98. In his interesting analysis of Sufism in Kirghizia (*Sufizm zhana anyng Qyrghyzystandagy agymdary*, Frunze, 1972), S. Mambetaliev accusses the Hairy Ishans of separating themselves from the Soviet state and of attempting to create a Muslim state, but he refers to the pre-war situation. However, more recently, in August 1963, a group of Hairy Ishans were tried in Frunze and condemned for anti-Soviet propaganda and for an attempt to create a Muslim state, "Mussulmanabad", cf. *Protiv religioznogo obmana i mrakobesia* (Frunze, 1970), p. 159. In Daghestan, S. Gadzhiev ("Pytaiushchii natsionalizm", *Sovetskii Dagestan* (Makhach-Qala, 1977 , p. 51) mentions that "the representative of our intelligentsia and some of our clerics try to isolate themselves. . .and to obtain the autonomy for their people."

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all movements of armed resistance to the Russian conquerors from the late eighteenth century to the last Chechen uprising in 1942-3 have been led or supported by Sufi brotherhoods. The exaltation of the memory of Kurban Murad in Turkmenistan,[99] of Imam Shamil and his *murids* in the Caucasus,[100] of Najmuddin of Hotso and Uzun Haji in Daghestan, all Sufi *murshids* who fought the Russians (Tsarist or Soviet) and many of whom were killed in battle or executed, has for Soviet Muslims a double meaning, at once religious and nationalistic.

The psychology of the Sufis helps to give to the rampant anti-Russian nationalism a fundamentalist colouring, and simultaneously it presents Sufi Islam as the best, almost the only, defender of national independence. Few Soviet Muslims still remember their intellectual modernist (*jadid*) ancestors, especially those who tried to reconcile Islam and Communism, who joined the Bolsheviks during the Revolution and the Civil War, and who disappeared in obscure circumstances in Stalin's purges; by contrast almost everybody remembers and venerates the memory of Sufi leaders who, against overwhelming odds, fought the Russians and became martyrs (*shahid*) for the greatest glory of God. The names of National-Communist leaders such as Sultan Galiev, Ahmet Baytursunov, Ali Khan Bukeykhanov or Zeki Validov are seldom mentioned in Soviet publications, while Najmuddin of Hotso or Kuban Murad are still regularly denounced in the Soviet press.[101] Sufi brotherhoods are thus placed at the meeting-point of religion and national currents which stimulate Soviet Islam; they are both movers and benefactors of this process.

While the different Muslim ethnic groups in the North Caucasus and in Central Asia have particular traditions on which they can base anti-Russian nationalist sentiment, Soviet sources leave the reader in little doubt that Soviet authorities see less danger, especially in the

99. Cf. among many others, M. Annapesov and S. Saparov, "Podlinnoe litso ishana — Pravda o sviatykh mestekh", *Turkmenskaia Iskra* and *Sovet Turkmenistany*, Ashkhabad, 9 January 1982, denouncing the veneration of the Naqshbandi sheikh Kurban Murad, the religious leader of the Ahal-Tekke tribe, who defended the fortress of Gök Tepe against the Russians in 1881.
100. Cf. especially S. Umarov, "Muridizm s blizskogo rasstoiania", *Nauka i religiia*, 1979, pp. 30-2, on the veneration of Shamil and of his *naib*, Tasho Haji, in Chechnia.
101. The tombs of Najmuddin of Hotso, Uzun Haji, Mohammed of Belokhany, Amay Khizirlezov and other Naqshbandi sheikhs who fought the Bolsheviks in the 1920s are among the most popular and venerated holy places of all the North Caucasus.

North Caucasus, from Chechen nationalism or Avar nationalism — as those terms might be understood in a modern context — than from a more general Muslim nationalism of the kind promoted by the Sufi brotherhoods. Indeed, conservative Islam ignores the recent division of the Muslim *millet* into modern Soviet nations, which were created after 1924 as a conscious act of Soviet policy during the period of *razmezhevanie*. Sufi practice underscores the unity of all Muslims of the Soviet Union and the absolute pre-eminence of the *Islamiyat* (the spirit of Islam) over narrow national identity. In the sense that Sufism promotes certain "pan"-ideologies, such as pan-Islamism and pan-Turkism, it is seen by Soviet specialists as being especially odious.

Less frequently, Sufi brotherhoods are accused of being channels through which subversive foreign propaganda reaches the Muslim territories of the Soviet Union. The denunciation of this aspect of the "Sufi danger" has become the speciality of the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, Mohammed-Nazar Gapurov, who in recent years, has made several charges of "religious subversion" which he linked to the radio broadcasts of Radio Liberty and of Radio Gorgan in Iran. In a report presented in March 1981 to the republican *aktiv* concerning the proceedings of the 26th Congress of the CPSU, he denounced the use of native religious extremists as "agents of subversion" by foreign anti-Soviet centres:

> The adversaries of Socialism utilise an enormous propaganda apparatus and are using scientific, economic and cultural relations, tourism and personal contacts. They utilise renegades, who have betrayed their Motherland, religious extremists and fanatics.[102]

The expression "religious extremists" and "fanatics" designate (in Turkmenistan especially) members of the Sufi brotherhoods; the expression "enormous propaganda apparatus" certainly concerns Radio Liberty, and the "renegades who have betrayed their Motherland" are those Turkmen who work for Radio Liberty. Of course, Gapurov's attacks cannot be accepted at face value, and it is doubtful that a single Central Asian Sufi adept has ever been recruited by a foreign agency, especially Radio Liberty. But the accusation of espionage and treason may be compared with the general Soviet

102. *Turkmenskaia Iskra* and *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 18 March 1981. Analysis in *Radio Liberty Research Bulletin*, 13 April 1981 (RL/160-81).

propaganda offensive launched against Islam in 1932. Then, as today, Muslim clerics were accused of sabotage, treason and espionage for Germany and Japan. These accusations were followed a few months later by a wave of arrests, deportations and mass executions. Today Gapurov and other authorities in the sensitive southern border regions of the Soviet Union recognise the danger of spillover from the fundamentalist Islamic events in Iran and Middle East and the coincident opportunities for Soviet Sufis. In what could be direct affirmation that this danger is real, the journal *Kommunist* (in Azeri, Baku, 2 February 1982) recently cautioned that "Religious activity [in Azerbaijan] is a direct consequence of the political-religious movement taking place in Iran."

(2) *Sufi communities are "closed societies" which live outside the Soviet legal establishment.* We believe that the reason why Sufi brotherhoods are the target of Soviet *agitprop* is not primarily because of their reactionary or even "terrorist" character, or their anti-Communist and anti-Russian beliefs, or because they provide religious support to various nationalist currents. Rather more immediate and threatening is the fact that the Sufi brotherhoods are eloquent testimony that large, well-organised communities with their own rules and discipline and their own institutions can survive and even expand entirely outside Soviet political control. From this standpoint alone they are intolerable to Soviet power. For instance, several Soviet experts have observed that the Batal Haji and Vis Haji in the Caucasus and the Yasawis in Central Asia have their own clandestine courts of justice, their own financial system based on the compulsory *zakat* among the adepts, and their own network of clandestine schools. Sufi adepts are accused of avoiding any participation in collective life, economic or social and even less so political. At the same time, the Soviets observe that the highly disciplined and hard-working Sufi communities are socially more solid and economically more prosperous,[103] probably more so than an average Soviet *kolkhoz*. Members of *murid* communities in the North Caucasus, writes a Chechen expert, "live completely outside

103. See in particular M.M. Vagabov, *Islam i sem'ia* (Moscow, 1980); A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal Khadzhi* (Groznyi, 1968); I.A. Makatov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (Moscow, 1978) and *Religioznye gruppy Amaiia i Kunta Khadzhi* (Makhach-Qala, 1965); for Central Asia *Perezhitki nekotorykh musul'manskikh techenii v Kirghizii i ikh istoriia* (Frunze, 1969) and T.S. Saidbaiev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1978).

the Soviet legal system, both in their working activity and in their family sphere.''[104]

As we noted earlier, what makes the Sufi communities different from other closed communities such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Molokans, Baptist *Initsiativniki* and Old Believers is their dynamic proselytisation. ''The *tariqa*'', writes a Kirghiz expert, ''are active, clandestine, secret societies, hostile to the socialist system and to the Soviet state, and as such they represent a serious social danger.''[105]

Finally, as some Soviet observers have noted, perhaps the most politically hazardous aspect of Sufism in the Soviet Union is the near-monopoly of contact enjoyed by Sufis with the larger Muslim population — relative to that of Soviet authorities. Under these conditions, the classic Marxist-Leninist strategy of controlling all media, through which the selected messages of Soviet communism can be fed, is largely ineffective.

> The conservatives are tightly bound to the believers. They live among them and their influence is much stronger than the influence of the modernists. They influence the opinion, not only of the individual believers, but often the public opinion of an entire village. It happens that members of our intelligentsia do not dare to criticise religion, being afraid to oppose the public opinion of the community.[106]

This observer might have added that the Sufis do not have to force themselves on non-Sufi Muslims: there is a latent commonalty of interest. Sufis thus practice in a resonant milieu from which Soviet Russian messages are routinely discarded.

104 A.M. Tutaev, *Reaktsionnaia sekta*, op. cit., p. 20.
105. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit., p. 43.
106. M.A. Abdullaev, ''Za glubokoe izuchenie ideologii Islam'', *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia* (Groznyi, 1972), p. 30.

6

CONCLUSION

The profile of Sufism in the Soviet Union presented here corresponds broadly to the Brezhnev era. Since his death, we have been able to detect several new trends, if not in the inner life of the Sufi brotherhoods, at least in the strategy of the Soviet regime toward them. The most prominent of these is the growing number and increasingly violent character of the media assaults launched against Sufism by the new Andropov and Chernenko teams. We are inclined to believe on the basis of early evidence, therefore, that the new Soviet leadership favours a more severe and more energetic line in this regard than its predecessor. One of the likely thrusts of this policy is to attempt to use propaganda and repression to curtail the intellectual, cultural, and emotional attraction of Sufism to the younger generation of Muslim intellectuals. It is quite possible that we shall soon see the appearance of a new, more "scientific" propaganda, which focuses less on the masses and more on specific intellectual classes: that is, one which is far more sophisticated than the crude efforts of the Brezhnev period.

This study necessarily remains incomplete for all of the reasons — and particularly for the limited evidence — noted throughout. We hope to have demonstrated, however, that to ignore the issue in the mistaken belief that no evidence exists cannot be justified. One can always want more evidence, but it is clear that it is sufficiently available to allow us to see a general profile of the Sufi phenomenon in most of its aspects and to draw some general, tentative conclusions. This qualification notwithstanding, we would be remiss if we failed to point out that there are still a number of important questions that cannot be answered with confidence on the strength of the existing evidence. Four, in our view, are especially important.

First, is it possible to identify contacts between Soviet Sufi organisations and the same Muslim brotherhoods across Soviet borders? If such contacts do exist, they are probably across the Afghan border with the Afghan Naqshbandis and Qadiris. Initiative for such contacts would almost certainly lie with the Afghans, but it should be

borne in mind that the opportunities for contacts of this kind would have increased dramatically after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 and the dispatching of Soviet Muslim advisers to Kabul and elsewhere in the country for several years before that. We know, for example, that several Afghan *mojahidin* groups, especially the fundamentalist Hezb-i Islami (Hekmetyar) and Jamiyat-i Islam, are keenly aware of the condition of Soviet Islam just across the Amu Darya. Representatives of these groups claim unofficially to have established contacts with Muslim religious dissenters in Soviet Central Asia; others, especially from the Hezb-i Islami, claim that there already exist many *bona fide* members of their political-religious organisations in the Soviet Union. Without substantiating evidence it is of course difficult to judge the validity of these claims at the present time. However, the increasingly numerous press articles in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan — the two republics where supposedly cross-border incursions by *mojahidin* have taken place — which glorify the efficiency of Soviet border guards, as well as containing frequent appeals by the republican leadership for "vigilance against spies, saboteurs, infiltrators, diversionists, and religious fanatics" who are apparently giving the authorities some anxiety, suggest that there may be more to the Afghan claim than rhetoric.

Secondly, is a compromise between Soviet power and the Sufi brotherhoods possible? Today this is unlikely, since relations continue to be rigidly hostile. Sufis view Soviet power as the devil incarnate, while Soviet authorities view the brotherhoods as a dangerous aberration that must be destroyed. One should always be aware of the opportunities for the regime to change its strategy, however, although its general absence of sophistication and flexibility in dealing with religious affairs for the last thirty years imply that the change would not come easily. In theory, at least, a new approach to the Sufi problem cannot be ruled out. Nor should we assume that Sufi brotherhoods are totally resistant to change. In the late nineteenth century, for example, the French promoted an important change in the character of the militant Sufi *zawwiya* in North Africa, which had resisted French conquest, into an inoffensive and pious religious association. Elsewhere in the Muslim world, Sufi brotherhoods have attained various degrees of prominence, ranging from their prohibition in Saudi Arabia to their "Rotary Club" manifestations in some other countries. Still, we should approach this possibility in the Soviet case with justifiable caution. Sufis in the Russian/Soviet empire have been

fighting Russian aggression for almost exactly two centuries (1783-1983), and this long struggle, with its holy war character, has left a solid legacy of mutual hatred and distrust. If change comes it will take a long time and, one suspects, it will require a Russian leadership which is cleverer, less doctrinaire, and more politically flexible than recent Soviet regimes have been.

Thirdly, what is the place of the Sufi brotherhoods in the political life of the Soviet republics? Here one must avoid exaggeration. The Muslim Sufi brotherhoods are not currently waging a holy war against Soviet power. They have no political ideology and no political programme. On the other hand, they do possess an exceptionally effective organisational framework around which potential political dissent with Muslim religious colouring could coalesce and be directed. As we have seen, the brotherhoods have strong and strict hierarchies, a developed style of discipline, and a strong spirit of dedication and sacrifice. It should not be forgotten that in the past the brotherhoods have always played a critical organisational and mobilisational role in the face of Russian aggression. There is no reason to assume that they would not play this role in the future. Moreover, by their very survival the brotherhoods have demonstrated that radical puritanism, even in its most fanatical and unyielding forms, can resist — indeed prosper — under Soviet pressure without losing a single element in its creed, ritual or way of life. In this sense Sufism is an implied promise to Soviet Muslims that it and not godless Marxism is the refuge of real men and that the final historical competition between them will be decided in favour of those who champion Faith.

Fourthly, can we envision a future for Sufism in the Soviet Union? This depends on domestic and foreign factors, in addition to the preservation of those collective and personal characteristics of the Sufis themselves. The vitality of Sufism depends to an important extent on the lack of vitality of the Soviet official Muslim establishment. Sufism thrives on adversity. As long as Soviet official Islam is represented by the four Muslim Spiritual Directorates, which are inherently weak organisations, Sufism will play an important role as an attractive alternative to dissenting Muslim intellectuals and those for whom Soviet oppression is an unacceptable burden. One need only cite recent Chinese experience in Xinjiang to understand how one set of forces gives way to another under different political conditions. During the Cultural Revolution and in the period of the ''Gang of Four'', Islam in China came under vicious attack. Mosques were closed, clerics were

persecuted and religious books and materials were publicly burnt. Not surprisingly, Sufism thrived. Since 1978, however, and especially in most recent years, Islam in the People's Republic of China has enjoyed unprecedented official favour and increasing popular vitality. At the same time Sufism, which moved in to fill the void during troubled times, has again receded according to Muslim religious leaders in Xinjiang who communicated directly to the authors.

Of course, an understanding of what causes Sufism to ebb and flow does not solve the Soviet problem; rather, it creates a new dilemma. To weaken Sufism they must strengthen the official Islamic establishment, a decision that would translate into more mosques, more religious schools, a lessening of anti-Islamic propaganda, and far greater contacts between Soviet Muslims and the Muslim world abroad: i.e. into all those elements which the Soviet regime now seeks to limit. Obviously such a change in strategy is full of pitfalls for continued Russian domination, and it is hard to envisage a Soviet Russian leadership that would be so daring. On the other hand, it is doubtful that crude, systematic Soviet anti-Islamic propaganda will give rise to a new generation of atheists, such as Soviet doctrine calls for, and Soviet practice has sought since the Bolsheviks seized power. Instead we see an upsurge in parallel Islam and the growing vitality of Sufism. Some clever Soviet anti-religious experts have begun to understand this simple truth, as their writings make clear. Whether they can convince their leaders and thus affect change is, however, doubtful.

The future of Sufism in the Soviet Union also depends on the evolution of various fundamentalist trends across Soviet borders, particularly in Afghanistan and Iran, but also in Turkey, Pakistan, China and the Arab Middle East. If the current expansion of Islamic fundamentalism is stopped and reversed — which means, among other things, the final defeat of the Afghan resistance, a change of regimes in Pakistan and Iran, and the liquidation of the Muslim Brothers movement in the Arab countries — then it is possible, but not probable, that the same conservative radical trends represented by the Sufi brotherhoods will ebb in the Soviet Union. If, on the other hand, fundamentalism prospers abroad, it is likely to prosper in the Soviet Union as well. While there may or may not be actual contact between Soviet Sufis and fundamentalists outside the Soviet Union, there is certainly communication between them, even if this only flows in one direction — from the outside in. Soviet organs may stem but they

cannot stop this communication, the existence of which they tacitly admit through their attempts to treat its impact with propaganda and repression.

Sufism is a fact, and a potent one, of Islamic reality in the Soviet Union. It has never been a negligible factor in the conduct of relations between Russians and the Muslims of the empire, and, given the domestic and foreign stimuli which affect it, it is unlikely to become negligible in the future. Therefore Sufism should not and cannot be seen as something of simply anecdotal significance, a colourful by-product of Islam in the Soviet state, or a temporal factor that can be brushed aside as lacking in meaning. Soviet planners take it very seriously, and so should we. Because the Soviet state is a closed society, we tend to see its problems as *sui generis*. Of course, many are, but it would be wrong to see Sufism in this light. Sufism in the Soviet Union has developed in ways which do indeed reflect its immediate political and social milieu, but Sufism *per se* is a worldwide phenomenon. Therefore Sufism in the Soviet Union must be viewed in this broader comparative perspective, as well as in its own distinctive environment.

We noted in our epigraph that Sufism has long engaged, rather over-optimistically, the attention of pre-Soviet and Soviet Russians. It is something which refuses to go away. A. Le Chatelier, in his *L'Islam au XIXème siècle* (Paris, 1888), observed in the North African context that "It is necessary to insist on the vitality of mystical Islam. It is this Islam which in the nineteenth century is the active religious principle." Writing a decade later, the Russian scholar E. Mallitski (*Ishany i Sufizm — Materialy po musul'manstvu*, vol. 3, Tashkent, 1898) made a similar and, we believe, appropriate observation:

> Given the immobility of official Islamic dogmas, all intellectual movements in the Muslim world must cover themselves with the flag of Sufism. The renaissance of Islam can take place only under its influence. . . . Every new idea, any movement, political or religious, reactionary or revolutionary, will cover itself with the flag of Sufism.

These observations, although written in the last century, should command our attention today.

APPENDIX A

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF SUFI HOLY PLACES

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MAIN "WORKING" HOLY PLACES IN THE CAUCASUS

KEY

1. Vedeno (Uzun Haji).
2. Kunta Haji Kishiev's mother.
3. Tasho Haji.
4. Umal Akhad Haji.
5. Bammat Giray Haji.
6. Mohammed Haji Karataev.
7. Batal Haji Belhoroy.
8. Salsa Haji Yandarov.
9. Abdul Aziz Sheptukaev (Sheikh Dokku).
10. Aul Akhulgo.
11. Kazakh (Haji Murat).
12. Aul Akhty.
13. Khunzakh.
14. Shalbuz Dagh.
15. Qyrkhlar.
16. Ghazi Mohammed.
17. Aksay (Sheikh Bashir).
18. Abdurrahman of Sogratl'.
19. Mohammed of Balakhany.
20. Paraul.
21. Akusha.
22. Tsudakhar.
23. Kurakh.
24. Buzovna ('Ali ayagy).
25. Ashab-i Käf.
26. Pir Sayid.
27. Häy Imam.
28. Imam Zade.
29. Qyrkhlar.
30. Khizir Zende.
31. At Aga.
32. Mehmet Efendi.

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1. **Holy places in the North Caucasus**

In no other area of the Soviet Union do holy places play such an important role as in the northeastern Caucasus. "In Daghestan and Chechnia-Ingushetia," writes a Soviet observer, "where the local population deserted the mosque long ago and does not listen to the official clergy, and where several regulations of Islam are out of usage, the veneration of holy places is still very much alive."[1]

Two Daghestani experts describe as follows the role of holy places in the North Caucasus:

> The holy places are numerous in Daghestan, such as the *ziyarat* of the Mount Shalbuz-Dagh, the tombs of the Qyrkhlar in the city of Derbent, Mount Akhulgo, the tomb of Iliyas Haji at Paraul-Durg in the district of Tabasaran, and many others which are visited every year by thousands of pilgrims, believers and unbelievers alike, who expect to heal their illness or to have their wishes granted. Among the pilgrims one may find students, children and young people, but mainly women. The pilgrimage exercises a determining influence on the preservation of religious feelings in the population. During the pilgrimage *zikr* ceremonies are performed and religious fanatics carry on open religious propaganda. They denounce irreligion and threaten the renegades with punishment in hell. . . . Collective fanaticism and religious exaltation may reach high levels of paroxysm when the pilgrims, believers and unbelievers alike, including the students, sing for hours the litanies of the *zikr* — "There are no gods but God." Pilgrims come from everywhere, from the villages and the cities, and when they return home, they sing religious songs and behave as active propandists of holy places.[2]

The greatest concentration of holy places is in the northeastern Caucasus, especially in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR and in the Daghestan ASSR, particularly in those areas where the Russian conquerors met the fiercest resistance, and which coincide with the territory where Sufi brotherhoods were the most active in the nineteenth century. Elsewhere, in Kabarda, in Muslim Ossetia and among the western Cherkess, holy places are rare and do not play a great role in the spiritual life of the population. According to several Soviet sources, before the launching of Khrushchev's anti-religious campaign there were 73 great *ziyarats* in Daghestan alone. In the early

1. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., p. 164.
2. M.A. Abdullaev and M.V. Vagabov, *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (Makhach-Qala, 1975), pp. 181-3.

1960s only two dozen remained,[3] the others having been closed. According to another source, there were 100 important holy places operating in Daghestan and Chechnia, plus a number of smaller ones "known only by the local population".[4]

Caucasian holy places may be classified in two main categories: the pre-Islamic ones, situated on the site of former pagan sanctuaries or Christian churches, or linked to a mythical personage who is often an avatar of a pre-Islamic deity; and tombs of Sufi sheikhs.

The meaning of the pilgrimage is different according to the kind of holy place. The believer visiting a holy place of the first group is asking for a favour, the granting of a wish, or is seeking to be healed, while those who visit the tomb of a Sufi saint — believers or even unbelievers — want to testify to their faith and their loyalty to their *tariqat*, or simply to demonstrate their national feeling or their resistance to infidels.

Recent Soviet sources reveal that holy places of the first category are steadily losing their popularity and are less and less frequented by pilgrims. Soviet authors exaggerate their importance to the disadvantage of holy places of the second category, the prestige of which remains unchanged. For the Daghestanis and the Chechens a Sufi saint is above all a *shahid*, a martyr of holy war, and his *mazar* is visited by believers and unbelievers, including atheists, because the saintly patron of the *mazar* is a model not only (or necessarily) of spirituality and piety but also of heroism and of loyalty toward his people. The popularity of a holy place therefore depends on the level not only of the religious feelings of the local population but of its nationalism and its anti-Russian xenophobia.

Pre-Islamic holy places. Those holy places, representing the oldest layer of popular religiosity, are more numerous in the Chechen-Ingush republic, where Islam was introduced only in the nineteenth century, than in Daghestan, which was Islamised in the eight and ninth centuries. The holy places of this category are as a rule situated on the site of some pre-Islamic holy ground — a sacred spring, a cave, sometimes the ruins of a sanctuary — which have been linked after the conversion of the population to a personage or an event in Islamic history.

3. S.M. Gadzhiev, *Puti preodoleniia ideologii Islama, na materialakh Severnogo Kavkaza i Dagestana* (Makhach-Qala, 1963).
4. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., pp. 164-5.

In his discription of the cult of saints in the Caucasus, I.A. Makatov enumerates a long list of these holy places and distinguishes those — the most popular ones — which have been thoroughly Islamised.[5] Such are, for instance, the *mazar* of Veli-Kyz, a former female deity of fertility,[6] or the old Ingush sanctuary of the god Tkhoba-Erda, destroyed after the conversion of the Ingush to Islam in the last quarter of the nineteenth century but still venerated because, according to a pious (but totally fantastic) local legend, it is at this same site that the Prophet Mohammed received and hid the holy Quran.[7]

In southern Daghestan a former pre-Islamic sanctuary on the summit of the Mount Shalbuz-Dagh has been associated with another mythical action of the Prophet, namely his supposed ascent of it on horseback. Traces of hoofs are still visible. Before the Revolution Shalbuz-Dagh was one of the most celebrated holy places of the Caucasus, and seven ascents of the mountain were supposed to be equal in value to a pilgrimage to Mecca.[8] According to another more credible legend, the sanctuary of Shalbuz-Dagh is the *ziyarat* of a sheikh Shalbuz — a Quraishite missionary from Damascus who was the first to convert the Lezghins to Islam in the thirteenth century. Today Shalbuz-Dagh remains one of the most venerated and the most frequented holy places of southern Daghestan.[9]

A.A. Salamov cites a similar case, the old heathen sanctuary Jemin Barz on the summit of the Mount Khaukal in the Chechen country. The sanctuary was destroyed in the nineteenth century but is still venerated. According to a local legend, a Sufi sheikh, Jema, is buried there. In 1959 the Qadiris used to assemble there to conduct *zikr* ceremonies and to organise public prayers.[10]

Salamov gives another and more striking example of the prestige attached by Sufis to a pre-Islamic sanctuary: an important temple of the

5. A similar evolution during the early centuries of Christianity has "christianised" a number of gods and heroes.
6. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., p. 169.
7. L.I. Klimovich, *Islam*, 2nd edn, Moscow, 1965, p. 266, and I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., p. 170.
8. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., p. 170.
9. M.A. Abdullaev and M.V. Vagabov, op. cit., p. 181.
10. M.A. Salamov, "Pravda o sviatykh mestakh v Checheno-Ingushetii", *Trudy Checheno-Ingushskogo Nauchnogoissledovatel'skogo Instituta pri Sovete Ministrov Checheno-Ingusheskoi ASSR* (Groznyi, vol. 9, 1964), p. 157.

god Erda (''Ertinan-Korta'' or ''Ertinan-Tle''), venerated by all the Chechen clans, existed near the aul of Guni, in the Vedeno district of the Chechen republic. The temple was destroyed when the Chechens were converted to Islam. At the time of Shamil, two Naqshbandi sheikhs, Bersa and Terma-oglu, were buried near the sanctuary. In the 1850s Kunta Haji Kishiev, who introduced the Qadiriya brotherhood into Chechnia, lived near Ertinan-Korta and his mother was buried there. Today her tomb remains one of the most important holy places of the North Caucasus.[11] In the same way, in the Ingush country, which was Islamised only in the late nineteenth century, several Muslim *mazars* have been founded near the sanctuary of the god ''Gal'erdy'', who is venerated by all Ingush clans.[12]

At the limit, the Islamisation of a pre-Islamic sanctuary, heathen or Christian, may remain incomplete. In Ossetia (Ossetians distinguish themselves from the other North Caucasian mountaineers by a remarkable religious eclectism) there are still some holy places common to Muslims and Christians. Generally these are former sanctuaries of clan ancestors linked by the Christians to St George (*Ustyrdjy* in Ossetian) and by the Muslims to a Sufi sheikh.[13]

Sufi holy places. Soviet experts, indifferent by ignorance or by incompetence to the spiritual aspect of the cult of saints but perfectly aware of its possible political manifestations, believe that while holy places of the first category have their origin in popular superstition and do not present a real threat to the edification derivable from products of socialism, those of the second category are not only religious fanaticism but also of ''bourgeois nationalism''. They are therefore supposed to be infinitely more dangerous. The saints venerated there are real and usually recent historical personages, some even contemporary. Nearly all of them have fought the Russians, Tsarist or Soviet, and many have died as martyrs (*shahids*) in a holy war. The veneration of such personages, Soviet experts affirm, might aggravate the existing anti-Russian xenophobia of the North Caucasians. ''The cult of the saints'', writes I.A. Makatov, ''and the religious superstitions [*predrassudki*] are closely related to the nationalism of the

11. Ibid., p. 157.
12. Ibid., p. 158.
13. A.G. Kuchiev, ''Formirovanie novoi grazhdanskoi orbriadnosti i ee rol' v preodolenii religioznykh perezhitkov'', *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, vol. 16, 1974), p. 63.

Daghestanis, Chechens and Ingush.''[14]

We do not know all the locations of the Sufi holy places in the North Caucasus, and the following list cannot be considered exhaustive. *Mazars* are constantly being destroyed or closed by the authorities, and as regularly re-opened or reconstructed by the believers. New holy places may also appear. The geography of the centres of pilgrimage is constantly changing, in many cases as a direct result of the severity of the line on religion followed by local authorities.

We have listed here only the most important holy places, the names of which appear frequently in anti-religious literature.

Chechen-Ingush Republic

Aul of Dyshne-Vedeno, *mazar* of Uzun Haji, the Chechen Naqshbandi sheikh who died in May 1920, a man of strict, uncompromising piety and hostility towards the Russians (Tsarist or Bolshevik), against whom he fought all his life. It is the most celebrated of all holy places of the North Caucasus. Uzun Haji may be considered a kind of ''patron saint'' of the mountaineers.[15] Closed officially by the authorities in 1944 and once again in the early 1960s, the *mazar* had been reopened and was still active and much visited in the 1970s and 1980s.

Aul of Haji Otar, in the district of Vedeno. *Mazar* of the mother of Kunta Haji Kishiev, who introduced the Qadiriya in the North Caucasus. Kunta Haji died in a Russian prison in 1867, and by projection it is his mother's tomb which attracts pilgrims. After the *mazar* of Uzun Haji, it is the most prestigious of Chechen holy places. The *mazar* was destroyed in 1944 when the Chechens were deported to Siberia. Reopened after their return, it was closed once again in 1961,[16] but was still active in the late 1970s.

Aul of Sayasan, district of Nozhay-Yurt. *Mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Tasho (or Tashev) Haji of Indiri, called ''the Great Haji'', a *murid* of the Sheikh Jemaleddin of Kazi-Kumukh and a *naib* of Shamil, who introduced the Naqshbandiya *tariqa* into the Chechen country. Tasho Haji was a famous warrior celebrated for his inflexible hatred of infidels. He remains for Chechens what Shamil is for Daghestanis — the spiritual master *par exellence* and the model of a political and military leader.

14. I.A. Makatov, ''Kul't sviatykh'', op. cit., p. 168.
15. Ibid., p. 180.
16. Ibid. and Salamov, op. cit., p. 167.

In the same district of Nozhay Yurt, near the *aul* of Zandak, exist three other famous holy places: the *mazars* of the Naqshbandi sheikhs Gezi Haji, Baybatyr Haji and his son Yusup Haji Baybatyrov. The last was, according to Salamov, "a declared counter-revolutionary". In 1919 he migrated to Turkey and died there. His body was brought back by his disciples.[17]

District of Shali, where in January 1864 Russian troops massacred 164 *murids* of the Kunta Haji brotherhood. According to a correspondent of Moscow's *Pravda* in 1973, "hundreds of pilgrims, old and young visit this area at harvest time."[18] There are several well known *mazars* in the district:

— in the *aul* of *Sirjan-Yurt*, the tomb of sheikh Umal Akhad Haji (or Umalat sheikh) a Naqshbandi Kumyk, *naib* of Shamil, sent in 1850 to Chechnia to preach *ghazawat* against Russians. Salamov notes that both the Naqshbandis and Qadiris used to assemble at his *mazar*.[19]

— in a nearby *aul* of the same district, the *mazar* of Bammat Giray Mitaev, a Qadiri sheikh, founder of the Bammat Giray *wird*, for whose adepts it is the main meeting place. This *mazar* is associated with the memory of Ali Mitaev, son and successor of Bammat Giray. In 1924 Ali Mitaev was arrested, tried for "counter-revolutionary activity" and executed the next year at Rostov-on-Don.[20]

District of Kurchaloy, in the *aul* of Bachi-Yurt, *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Mohammed Haji Karataev, sent by Shamil to Chechnia to preach holy war against Russians.

District of Nazran (Ingush territory), in the aul of Surhohi, the *mazar* of Batal Haji Belhoroy (Belhoroev), a Qadiri sheikh, founder of the Batal Haji *wird*. Surhohi is the spiritual centre of this brotherhood — the most puritan and most militant of all Sufi *tariqa*. This *mazar* is associated with the memory of some twenty sons and grandsons of Batal Haji, all of whom were killed in battle or executed by the Soviet authorities between 1920 and 1940.

District of Urus-Martan, in the *aul* of Alkhazurovo, the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Salsa-Haji Yandarov, arrested in 1928, tried for "economic sabotage" and executed in 1929.[21]

District of Groznyi, the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Abdul Aziz

17. A.A. Salamov, "Pravda", op. cit., p. 166.
18. *Pravda*, Moscow, 11 November 1973.
19. A.A. Salamov, op. cit., p. 166.
20. Ibid., p. 167.
21. Ibid., p. 166.

Sheptukaev (''Sheikh Dokku'') executed by the Soviets and called by Salamov a ''reactionary capitalist''.[22]

Daghestan

Holy places are frequented by more pilgrims in Daghestan than in the Chechen-Ingush Republic. Several of them are located in areas where all official mosques have been destroyed, especially those of southern Daghestan (Lezghin and Tabasaran regions) where, according to *Sovetskii Dagestan*, numerous active holy places have replaced the closed mosques. Such are the *ziyarats* of Akhty and Untsukul,[23] the Mount Shalbuz-Dagh or the underground sanctuary of Durg in Tabasaran.[24]

The oldest and most famous holy place of Daghestan is the *ziyarat* of Qyrkhlkar in the city of Derbent, commemorating the ''Forty Martyrs'' who were killed by infidels (possibly Jewish Khazars) in the tenth century;[25] also associated with this *mazar* are the ''Forty Shahids'' who defended Derbent against the Russians in 1810 and the victims of the repression subsequent to the 1877 uprising.

Many other working holy places belong to Shamil's time:

Aul of Akhulgo in the Avar territory, where 100 of Shamil's *murids* were killed in 1839. The pilgrimage to Akhulgo was recently practised by believers and unbelievers from all of Upper Daghestan.[26]

Aul of Qypchakh in Northern Azerbaijan near the Daghestani border, *mazar* of Haji Murat, companion (and adversary) of Shamil, on the site where he was killed by the Russians. Pilgrimage was occurring here at the end of the 1970s.[27]

Aul of Gimry in the Avar country *mazar* of Ghazi Mohammed, the first Naqshbandi imam of Daghestan, killed there by the Russians in 1832. ''Recently'', writes I.A. Makatov, ''a group of clerics have built a mausoleum on his tomb.''[28]

22. Ibid., p. 163; and Kh.B. Mamleev, *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* (Groznyi, 1970), p. 13.
23. Sh. Ismailov, ''Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty'', *Sovetskii Dagestan* (Makhach-Qala, 1982), I. pp. 1-7.
24. D. Ikhilov, ''Perezhitki drevnikh verovanii i puti ikh preodoleniia'', *Sovetskii Dagestan*, 1981, IV. pp. 23-8.
25. The cult of the Forty Martyrs is common to all the Muslim world.
26. I.A. Makatov, ''Kul't sviatykh'', op. cit., p. 168.
27. I.A. Makatov, *Ateisty v nastuplenii*, op. cit., p. 90.
28. Ibid., p. 91.

Aul of Aksay in the district of Hasav Yurt, in the Kumyk country of North Daghestan, with several tombs of Naqshbandi sheikhs of the so-called "Aksay dynasty": sheikh Bashir and his two sons Abdi and Arap, and sheikh Abdul Wahhab Haji Dydimov.[29]
Aul of Nizhnie-Kazanishchi south of Buynaksk, in the Kumyk territory in Central Daghestan, commemorative *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Abdurrahman of Sogratl' — one of the leaders of the 1877 revolt, who died in a Siberian prison. This most venerated holy place was destroyed by the authorities in 1959, reopened and closed once again in 1964.
Aul of Gergebil in the Avar territory, with two important holy places: the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Mohammed of Balakhany who commanded the Daghestani rebels at the battle of Arakan valley in October 1920, at which an important unit of the Red Army was destroyed to the last man. Sheikh Mohammed was killed by the Soviets in 1922.[30] His *mazar* enjoyed special prestige and was destroyed by the authorities in 1964. Also, the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Najmuddin of Hotso, elected in 1917 imam of Daghestan and supreme chief of the Daghestani-Chechen uprising in 1920-1. Najmuddin of Hotso was captured and executed by the Soviets in 1925. His *mazar* was reopened (or rediscovered by the authorities) only in 1974 when it became an important centre of pilgrimage.
Aul of Paraul district of Buynaksk in Kumyk country of Central Daghestan, *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Iliyas Haji of Tsudakhar. In 1969 the *imam Khatib* of the working mosque of Buynaksk invited believers to make a pilgrimage during Ramadhan to this holy place and to the tomb of Abdurrahman of Sogratl'.[31]

This list is far from complete even if we consider only the most important of the Caucasian holy places. Soviet experts have mentioned recently several other working *mazars* whose origins are unknown to us, such as the *ziyarat* of the aul Utamysh (district of Kayakent in the Kumyk country, near the Caspian coast) called by Gajiev "one of the most celebrated and venerated of Daghestani holy places"[32]; the *mazar* of Tsudakhar in the Darghin country; the tomb of the sheikh Haji Ramazan in the aul of Shtul (district of Kurakh) in the valley of Samur

29. A.A. Salamov, "Pravda", op. cit., p. 167.
30. A Todorskii, *Krasnaia Armiia v gorakh* (Moscow, 1924), pp. 80-4.
31. N. Ashirov, *Evoliutsiia Islama v SSSR* (Moscow, 1973), p. 148.
32. S.M. Gadzhiev, *Puti preodoleniia*, op. cit., pp. 221 and 223.

in Lezghin territory (southern Daghestan) and many other "working" holy places: Irakay (district of Tsudakhar), Gumbetov in Avar territory, Gashcha (district of Kayakent), Lutkyn (district of Charoda), Nakazukh (district of Gunib, Avar country), Yarkany (district of Untsukul), and others.

The persistence of pilgrimage to the holy places of Sufi origin is a constant preoccupation of Soviet authorities. Recently, however, they have discovered that a decision to destroy a holy *mazar*, when taken from above by Russians, may be counter-productive. Therefore such a decision is often taken under the cover of a local village assembly (*Jema'at*). It may even happen that the decision is delegated to special assemblies of elders and even old women who, in the name of "socialist legitimacy", ask the authorities to intensify the struggle against "superstitions".[33] Soviets may also solicit the help of the official religious authorities of the Spiritual Board of Machach-Qala, who publish special *fetwas* condemning the pilgrimage to holy places.[34]

The onslaught against holy places was particularly vigorous during the period of Nikita Khrushchev's rule. In 1963 Gajiev optimistically believed that "in Daghestan, out of the 73 working *ziyarats* there remain less than twenty, and even when these are tombs of Sufi saints, they attract but few isolated pilgrims.[35] Ten years later Avksent'ev, more cautiously acknowledged that "pilgrimages to the *ziyarats* are still very frequent."[36]

Eighteen years later, in 1981, V.A. Kuroedov, Chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs of the Soviet Government, noted the "reactivisation" of the holy places in Central Asia and the Caucasus, closed in the 1960s. As an example, he mentioned the tomb of a certain Wahhab Haji in Hasav Yurt who was condemned (and probably executed) for "counter-revolutionary activity", which had been transformed into a holy place by the fanatics.[37] And in 1982 Sh. Ismailov, First Secretary of the Daghestani *obkom*, admitted that despite the intensity of anti-religious propaganda, pilgrimages to holy places (he mentioned especially the *mazars* of Akhty, Untsukul and Derbent) "continue as before".[38]

33. I.A. Makatov, "Kul't sviatykh", op. cit., p. 178.
34. Ibid., p. 174.
35. S.M. Gadzhiev, *Puti*, op. cit., p. 225.
36. A.V. Avksent'ev, *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (Stavropol, 1975), p. 150.
37. V.A. Kuroedov, *Religiia i tserkov v Sovetskom gosudarstve* (Moscow, 1981), p. 200.
38. Sh. Ismailov, "Vyshe uroven' ", op. cit., p. 5.

2. **Holy places in Azerbaijan**

The holy places of Azerbaijan have been better studied than those of the North Caucasus, probably because they are located in the lowlands and are therefore more easily accessible than the *mazars* of upper Daghestan and Chechnia. Most Azerbaijani holy places are situated in the Shia territory and are not directly associated with the activity of the Sufi brotherhoods; their pre-Islamic character (animist, Zoroastrian or Christian) is often clearly perceptible. Most of them are closed, but a few still attract pilgrims.

Before the Revolution there were some 500 holy places in the territory of present-day Azerbaijan called *pir, mazar, imam-zade* (Shia) or *ojaq* (Sunni); this last word means "hearth", which reveals its Zorostrian origin.[39] The holy places have been studied by several pre-revolutionary Russian and Soviet archaeologists and historians;[40] those specialists still active have been absorbed into the work of creating anti-religious propaganda.[41]

In May 1980, according to an Azeri anti-religious specialist, Fatulla oglu, several dozen holy places were still working, though only a few were regularly frequented by pilgrims; all "remained active centres of religious propaganda and were breeding-grounds of superstition. . . ."[42] Fatulla oglu adds that "a pilgrimage to a holy place may give birth, among people previously indifferent to Islam, to an intense religious feeling." As in the North Caucasus, Azeri anti-religious specialists, even those who try to be scholarly, are not very

39. M.M. Sattarov and F.G. Kacharli, "Razvitie ateizma v Sovetskom Azerbaidzhane", *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1968), p. 46.
40. Among the more or less scientific works on the holy places of Azerbaijan: I. Meshchaninov, "Piry Azerbaidzhana", *Izvestia Gosudarstvennoi Akademii Material'noi Kul'tury* (Leningrad, IX-4, 1934), pp. 3-9, Z.I. Iampol'skii, "Piry Azerbaidzhana", *Voprosy istorii religii i ateizma* (Moscow, VIII-1960), pp. 219-39 and by the same author, *Azerbaidzhanda gedim dinler* ("The old religion in Azerbaijan"), (Baku, 1959); A.K. Alekperov, *Kul'ty Azerbaidzhana i antireligioznaia rabota* (Baku, 1959). The most detailed monograph on Islam in Azerbaijan, containing numerous references to the holy places, is the work of M.M. Sattarov, *Islam dini galyglary haggynda* ("Concerning Islamic religious survivals"), (Baku, 1967).
41. Among the numerous anti-religious books and pamphlets, one may note G. Mamadli, *Tufeili ochaqlary* ("Centres of parasites"), (Baku 1963) and A. Fatulla oglu, "Prostye sekrety sviatykh mogil", *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow, 1980), V. pp. 31-3.
42. A. Fatulla oglu, op. cit., p. 31.

competent in religious matters. In particular they are unable to understand the mechanism of the pilgrimage; not one among them links the pilgrimage to the Sunni holy places to the activity of the Naqshbandi adepts, who are still numerous and active in northern Azerbaijan.

On the other hand, most Soviet specialists note the following two aspects of the working holy places. First, numerous "charlatans", "self-appointed mullahs", "parasites", "self-appointed guardians of the holy places", "crooks", "obscurantists" and "vagabond fanatics" have invaded the holy places, especially since the fall of Khrushchev. These expressions, as we have seen, generally refer to Sufi adepts. And secondly, during the last fifteen years several new holy places have appeared around Muslim cemeteries, and the "obscurantist charlatans" are systematically engaged in the transformation of historical monuments into places of pilgrimage. It is obvious that such a transformation could not be the work of individual "charlatans" who would be unlikely to defy Soviet power single-handed.

"It may happen [writes Fatulla oglu] that with the complicity of the local Soviet institutions and taking advantage of the indifference of local atheists, some clever parasites transform historical monuments which belong to the people into places of pilgrimage. This took place in the mausoleum of Berdaa, in the sanctuary of Asaf Käf (district of Bebek), in the sanctuary of Kanzasar in the village of Vanlu (district of Mardakert), which is a monument of the thirteenth century, and also in the mausoleum of Agbil (district of Kuba), which is a monument of the sixteenth century. There are other examples. They show that we should not underestimate the importance which believers attribute to holy places, even when the pilgrimage has been momentarily interrupted."[43]

According to another Soviet anti-religious specialist, P.G. Mahmudov, professor of aesthetics and atheism at the University of Baku, the cult of the saints is especially active in the southern and the eastern (Shi'a) districts of the republic.[44] Pilgrimages generally take place during the Shi'a festival of Ashura, commemorating the death of

43. Ibid., p. 31.
44. P.G. Mahmudov, "O sushchnosti perezhitkov kul'ta sviatykh v Azerbaidzhane" in *Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii modernizatsiia Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma* (Moscow, 1968), p. 64.

the Imam Husein on the 10th day of the month of Muharram. In 1968 between 10,000 and 15,000 pilgrims visited the *mazars* of Hay-Imam near Kirovobad, Imam-Zade of Berdaa and Pir Sayid in the village of Nardaran.[45]

According to the same observer, comfortable hotels have been built near the holy places from the offerings of pilgrims — hotels which can be compared favourably with any local Soviet hotel:

> In the village of Aldädä in the district of Tauz, a hotel has been constructed near the local *mazar*, with all necessary conveniences, beds, samovars, vessels. . . . Similar hotels have been built around other holy places.[46]

The following working holy places are often mentioned in the Soviet periodical and non-periodical literature of the 1970s and 1980s:

Ali Ayagy (''Ali's foot'') in the village of Buzovna, district of Mashtaga in the Apsheron peninsula. The mausoleum, one of the most venerated in Azerbaijan, contains a rock with the imprint of Ali's foot. It was described as active in an editorial of *Kommunist* (Baku, 22 March 1982).
Mausoleum of Ashab-i Käf (''The Seven Sleepers of Ephesus'') on the Mount Asaf Käf in the Nakhchevan ASSR.
Mazar of Pir Sayid in the village of Nardaran, district of Mashtaga in the Apsheron peninsula.
Mazar of Dedegünesh in the village of the same name.
Mazar of Hay-Imam near the city of Kirovobad (formerly Ganja), one of the most venerated holy places of Azerbaijan, frequented by numerous pilgrims according to an article by F. Kocherly (*Kommunist*, Baku, 10 February 1982).
The two mazars of Imam-Zade in the village of Nehram near the city of Berdaa in the Nakhchevan ASSR.
Mausoleum of the Qyrkhlar (in Azeri) or ''Chahil Tanan'' (in Persian), meaning ''the Forty'' (Martyrs), a thirteenth-century monument in the village of Nüsnüs, district of Ordubad in the Nakhchevan ASSR.
Mazar of Khizir Zende (also Nabi Khizir or Khizir Iliyas) in the village of Mardekan near Baku, supposed to be the tomb of the prophet Khizir, the Muslim equivalent of Saint Elias.
Masar of At-Aga in the village of Shuvalan, district of Azizbekov, in

45. Ibid., p. 66.
46. Ibid., p. 65.

the Apsheron peninsula. At-Aga is a contemporary saint who died in 1951.
Mazar of Aldädä in the village of Tauz.
Mazar of Mehmet Efendi, also called *the Great Ziyarat*, in the district of Nukha.

Contrary to the situation in Daghestan and Chechnia, where local Soviet authorities are vigorously struggling against the cult of the saints and the pilgrimage to the *mazars* with the active help of the religious authorities of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Makhach-Qala, the fight against religion in general and against holy places in particular encounters special obstacles in Azerbaijan, which is largely a Shi'a country with its old tradition of *taqiya* (an official right to apostasy). Local authorities are indifferent toward religion, and the religious authorities of the Baku Spiritual Board are reluctant to let themselves be involved in the campaign against parallel Islam. P.G. Mahmudov correctly describes this peculiar situation:

> It is only rarely that the [official] religious authorities of Azerbaijan agree to denounce publicly the practice of the cult of the saints. During the last few years several new important cemeteries, serving several districts, have been built around the so-called holy mausoleums; they are generally visited by believers on Thursdays and Fridays. Religious leaders used to perform religious rites on these occasions.

And Mahmudov, a more astute observer than his Soviet colleagues from *agitprop*, concludes: "It is not possible to isolate the veneration of the Muslim saints from general religious feeling or to try to oppose it to the official Muslim hierarchy."[47]

3. **Holy places in Central Asia**

Pre-revolutionary Central Asia was an immense territory with a heterogenous Irano-Turkic population, where the contrast between sedentary communities which had lost all traces of their clan-tribal structure and nomads who had preserved their traditional tribal social system could be clearly seen. Today all nomads have been sedentarised, but among the Turkmen, some Uzbeks, the Kazakhs, the Karakalpaks

47. Ibid., p. 66.

MAIN "WORKING" HOLY PLACES IN CENTRAL ASIA

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KEY

Turkmen SSR

1. Baba Gambar.
2. Baba Gambar.
3. Sultan Sanjar.
4. Gözli Ata.
5. Göch-Murad Akhun.
6. Mulla Qaqa.
7. Atuali Baba.
8. Pakyr Sheikh.
9. Seyyid Nejepi (Najafi).
10. Salyr Gazan.
11. Sheikh Sherep.
12. Khojagan Baba.
13. Chopan Ata.
14. Qara Baba.
15. Ismamut Ata.
16. Göjük Baba.
17. Astana Baba.
18. Mahtum Azam Jurjani.
19. Sheikh Kemaleddin Husein Khorezmi.
20. Sheikh Shibli Khorassani.
21. Khoja Yusuf Hamadani.
22. Sheikh Najmuddin Kubra.
23. Aq Ishan (Zengi Baba).
24. Bilal Baba.
25. Sheikh Kurban Murat.
26. Seragt Baba.
27. Sheikh Fahreddin Razi.
28. Sheikh Abu 'Ali Dakkak (Sheikh Alov).

Karakalpak ASSR

29. Qaraqum Ishan.
30. Daud Ata.
31. Mazlumkhan Sulu.
32. Sultan Vais Baba.
33. Narimjan Baba.
34. Shamun Nabi.

Kirghiz SSR

35. Takht-i Suleyman.
36. Kirghiz Ata.
37. Arslan Ata.
38. Idris Peyghamber.
39. Hazrat Ayub.
40. Aq Taylaq Ata.
41. Fazil Shah.
42. Ismanali Ishan.

Tajik SSR

43. Sheikh Yaqub Charkhi.
44. Balagardan.
45. Khoja Ab-i Garm.
46. Imam Zein ul-Abidin.
47. Khoja Sabzpush.
48. Mulla Junayd.
49. Khoja Hamadani.
50. Khoja Tajeddin.
51. Sheikh Mohammed Bashara.
52. Khoja Aref Revgari.
53. Khoja Takaburt.

Uzbek and Kazakh SSR

54. Shahimardan.
55. Sheikh Bahautdin Naqshband.
56. Shah-i Zenda.
57. Palvan Pir.
58. Khojami Kabri.
59. Sheikh Ahmed Yasawi.

and the Kirghiz the clan and tribal kinship is still felt as a psychological and even as a political reality.[48]

The cult of the ancestors and its corollary, the veneration of the holy places, which represent in Central Asia the material basis of the Sufi brotherhoods, are differently understood and practised in the old sedentary territories (Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, southern Kazakhstan) and in the areas of former nomadism (Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Karakalpakistan, Kirghizia). In the first group the not very numerous holy places are the tombs of well-known Sufi saints: Bahautdin Naqshband, Ahmed Yasawi, Yusuf Charkhi, Yusuf Hamadani, Khoja Ahrar, Najmuddin Kubra and so on. Their mausoleums are generally famous historical monuments which cannot be destroyed by the Soviet authorities and are usually converted into anti-religious museums. In the areas of former nomadism the holy places, very numerous but less important archeologically, are related not only to the Sufi brotherhoods but also to the cult of the ancestors (in Turkmenistan) or to the pre-Islamic sanctuaries (Kirghizia) which have been covered over by an Islamic varnish. Often they are situated in the middle of Muslim cemeteries, and their destruction by the authorities is therefore difficult.

Turkmenistan

Among all the Central Asian republics, it is in Turkmenistan that the Sufi brotherhoods are the most active and that the holy places play the most important and active role in the preservation of the religious feelings of the population. The republic has the largest number of working holy places, enjoying immense popularity. It is also in the Turkmen republic that the Soviet authorities have succeeded in weakening dramatically the official Muslim establishment by a systematic campaign to destroy mosques. In 1983 only four small working mosques remained in all of Turkmenistan,[49] two in the

48. In the areas of former nomadism, the clan and tribal systems are better preserved paradoxically thanks to the Communist Party itself. In order to protect himself from the treacherous attacks of his comrades and subordinates in the Party apparatus, the native communist leader surrounds himself with his tribal kinsmen, the tribal or clanish loyalties being more reliable than the Party loyalties. This is true for the lowest as well as for the highest levels of the Party apparatus.
49. N. Bayramsakhatov, "Proiavlenie i prichiny zhivuchesti Islama v bytu sel'skogo naseleniia, in *Religioznye perezhitki i puti ikh preodoleniia v Turkmenistane* (Ashkhabad, 1977), pp. 50-1.

Tashauz region in the extreme north of the republic (''Shally-Kar'' and ''Billa-Baba'' in the district of Ili Ali) and two in the region of Mary in the extreme south (''Yusuf Khoja Baba'' on the site of the tomb of the great Sufi saint Yusuf Hamadani and ''Talkhatan Baba'' in the district of Iolatan). Ashkhabad is the only republican capital of Central Asia where all mosques have been destroyed.

In spite of the obvious weakness of official Islam, all recent Soviet sources testify to the exceptionally high level of religious feeling of the Turkmen population, which is more vigorous and intense than among the other Muslim nationalities of Turkestan. This apparently paradoxical situation is due to the activity of the parallel Islamic organisations. Several Soviet observers note that in Turkmenistan the holy places replace the closed mosques, and the Sufi adepts assume the functions of the ''registered clerics''. The current situation of the holy places in Turkmenistan is relatively well known, thanks to the authentically scientific works of S.M. Demidov and V.N. Basilov.[50]

The forced sedentarisation of the nomad tribes, which took place around 1928 in Turkmenistan, was less dramatic than the sedentarisation of the Kazakh nomads and was not accompanied by the disruption of the native society. Today the division of the Turkmen nation into clans, tribes and tribal federations is still perceived as a living reality. The activity of the local Sufi brotherhoods and the organisation of the cult of ancestors are intimately tied to the tribal system of the Turkmens; more precisely, the veneration of the holy places depends on the activity of the so-called ''Holy Tribes'' (Awlad),[51] whose members are supposed to descend from three of the four Medina califs (in Turkmen *Dört Shahriyar*, ''the four friends''): Abu Bakr (Shikhs), Osman (Ata) and Ali (Seyyids, Mahtums, Müjevirs, and Khojas). The ''Holy Tribes'' represent today small tribal formations who do not blend with other Turkmen tribes because they are protected even now by rigorous endogamic taboos. Their total number is estimated by Demidov at a ''little more than 30,000''.[52] They live in

50. Compared to other Soviet experts, S.M. Demidov, a Russian turkologist living in Turkmenistan, is remarkably serious and objective. He has published numerous articles and two major books: *Sufizm v Turkmenistane — Evoliutsiia i perezhitki* (Ashkhabad, 1978) and *Turkmenskie Ovliady* (Ashkhabad, 1976). V.N. Basilov is the author of *Kul't sviatykh v Islame* (Moscow, 1970).
51. From the Arabic *awlad* (sing. *walid*): son, inheritor, in Turkmen *ovlat*.
52. *Turkmenskie Ovliady*, op. cit., p. 53. In the 1920s their number was estimated at 30,000 by G. Karpov, ''Turkmeniia i Turkmeny — istoriko-Etnograficheskii

separate villages or groups of villages on the territory of other tribes, and less often as groups of families or even as isolated families among other tribes.[53] All members of the "Holy Tribes" enjoy the reputation of holiness and are even supposed to possess supernatural powers. Soviet sources provide abundant examples of their prestige. V.N. Basilov quotes the example of a professional jockey, a member of the Khoja tribe, who used to win all his races because nobody dared to pass him.[54]

A Turkmen sociologist, Ovezov, surveying in 1967 the districts of Goktepe, Kerabakaul, Lenin and Baharden, found that 80 per cent of the practising Muslims believed in the "magical powers" of the Awlads.[55] In the "Karl Marx" *kolkhoz* in the Lenin district, he surveyed sixty-nine believers:

Age	*Believed in the holiness of the Awlad*	*Did not believe in the holiness of the Awlad*
57–67	15	3
47–52	14	7
37–42	19	11

(*Source:* K. Ovezov, op. cit., p. 72.)

In the district of Baharden, the survey covered forty-six persons, twenty-three of each sex (see table opposite).

Before the Revolution the Awlad used to fulfil several specific diplomatic, social and educational functions which are today more or less completely abandoned (at least officially), which may be compared to those of the Bocchicchio family among the other Mafia families in New York, according to Mario Puzo in *The Godfather*. But they

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ocherk" in *Turkmenovednie* (Ashkhabad, 1929-X-XI), p. 40, and by O. Tumanovich, *Turkmenistan i Turkmeny* (Ashkhabad-Poltoratsk, 1926), p. 87. In 1900 F. Mikhailovich estimated their numbers at 1,700 tents which represents between 8,500 and 10,000 persons — *Tuzemtsy Zakaspiiskoi Oblasti i ikh zhizn'* (Ashkhabad, 1900), p. 38.

53. S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady*, op. cit., pp. 50-3, gives the precise location and the numerical importance of each tribe: 13,000-15,000 Atas (including the Iranian Atas) around 7,000 Shikhs, 3,000-3,500 Müjevirs, and 4,000-4,500 Khojas. Demidov does not give the numbers of the Seyyids and Mahtums.
54. V.N. Basilov, *Kul't sviatykh*, op. cit., p. 74.
55. K. Ovezov, *Vliianie religioznykh organizatsii dukhovenstva i aktivnykh veruiushchikh i puti ikh preodoleniia v Turkmenistane* (Ashkhabad, 1977), p. 72.

	Women	*Men*
Believed in the supernatural powers of the Awlad	15	6
Did not believe	2	8
Were hesitant	3	4
Gave uncertain answers	3	4

(*Source:* K. Ovezov, op. cit. p. 74.)

preserve in totality two important religious functions. First, they provide the quasi-totality of the guardians of the cemeteries. In Turkmenistan Muslim cemeteries are generally organised around the tomb of a saint, an historical or mythical personage called the *gonambashy* (head of the cemetery), who is often a member of one of the Holy Tribes. The actual guardian of the cemetery, as a rule, is a descendant of the *gonambashy*. "It is impossible to enumerate all the *gonambashy* who belong to the Awlad," writes a Soviet expert; "they are too numerous."[56] Secondly, the Awlad provide the hereditary leadership of the Sufi brotherhoods. All male members of the Holy Tribes, including the small children, are supposed to be Sufis and bear the honorary title of "ishan" (given to the Sufi sheikh). The origin of this special function may be explained by the traditional ties between the Awlads and the Yasawiya brotherhood. According to various Turkmen legends, the ancestors of the Holy Tribes were disciples of Ahmed Yasawi or of his master Yusuf Hamadani.[57] Certain tribes, in particular the Atas, still practice today the loud *zikr* typical of the Yasawiya, and during its performance they sing the poems (*Hikmet*) of Ahmed Yasawi.[58]

Bayramsakhatov, the leading anti-religious specialist of the republic noted in 1977 that in the *kolkhoz* "Mozkva", in the district of Kunia-Urgench, out of the 160 families, forty used to visit the holy places regularly.[59] In another *kolkhoz*, "Leningrad" in the Takhta district, ten out of the forty believers acknowledged that they were performing regularly the five daily prayers, and used to visit the local holy place

56. S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady*, op. cit., pp. 25-6.
57. According to a local legend, Gözli Ata, the ancestor of the Atas, and Qara-Baba, the ancestor of the Shikhs, were disciples of Ahmed Yasawi.
58. S.M. Demidov, *Turkmenskie Ovliady*, op. cit., p. 156.
59. N. Bayramsakhatov, "Proiavlenie", op. cit., p. 57.

(the *mazar* of Ismamut Ata).[60] However, another specialist, T. Boyarov (a Russian), surveying at the same period the *kolkhoz* "8th of March", found that out of the 205 persons under survey only five had visited the local holy place (the *mazar* of Ibrahim Azam).[61] But it is probable that the Turkmen *kolkhozniki*, when interrogated by anti-religious investigators, were more cautious with the Russian infidel than with the Turkmen who, although a Communist and an atheist, remained in their eyes a Muslim.

In 1965, the same Boyarov observed the presence of 100 pilgrims at the tomb of the sheikh Kebir Ata (Najmuddin Kubra) in Kunia-Urgench, some coming from Uzbekistan and some even from Tajikistan. The next year he saw at the same holy place twenty-five pilgrims in forty minutes. Ten years later, in 1975-6, he obtained the following answers in the *kolkhoz* "Qyzyl Yulduz" in the district of Kunia Urgench, situated near the *mazar* of Najmuddin Kubra:[62]

	Age		
	55–75	*45–55*	*25–45*
Have made the pilgrimage	23	4	—
Consider the pilgrimage a success	12	2	—
Offered the *sadaqa* for the poor	18	1	—
Offered the *sadaqa* for the ishans	2	1	—
Did not make the pilgrimage	58	46	47
Total	113	54	47

S. Demidov tried to evaluate the popularity of certain holy places by the number of *ex-votos* left by pilgrims (clay models representing a bow to obtain a boy and a cradle for a girl, and a small clay ball for a healing). In October 1964, at the *mazar* of Seyyid Nejefi in the high valley of Sumbar, he found sixty cradles and bows, "brought recently". In August 1967, at the shrine of Molla Qara he found

60. Ibid., p. 36.
61. T. Boiarov, "Sovremennoe sostoianie religioznosti sel'skogo naseleniia i degradatsiia religioznykh verovanii (na materialakh Kunia-Urgenchskogo raiona)" in *Religioznye perezhitki i puti. . .*, op. cit., p. 175.
62. Ibid., pp. 181-2.

ninety cradles, at the *mazar* of Pakyr Sheikh thirteen cradles, and at the *mazar* of Sheikh Alov twenty cradles; and in August 1965 at the *mazar* of Kashkar Ata he discovered forty balls, some days later fifty, and a little later sixty balls.[63] It seems therefore that the frequency of visits to the holy places, at least in these regions and probably throughout Turkmenistan, has remained more or less the same during the last fifteen years.

In 1972 Demidov spent two weeks at the *mazar* of the Naqshbandi sheikh Kurban Murat in Gök Tepe (Kurban Murat had led the resistance of the Ahal-Tekke tribesmen to the Russians), and discovered that despite the intense cold (December) the holy place was visited every day by several pilgrims.

These sporadic observations do not provide a sufficient basis for any general conclusions to be drawn. Soviet sources are contradictory when they try to appreciate the vitality of the holy places: the holders of the "optimistic" line tend to underestimate the scale of the pilgrimage and describe the holy places as moribund survivals of a medieval past, while the higher Communist Party cadres, more pessimistic or more realistic, tend to overestimate their importance and their danger. For instance, in his report "on the ideological work" presented at the plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, M.N. Gapurov, first secretary, used violent terms to denounce the incapacity of the *raykom* of the Baharden district to put an end to the pilgrimage to the shrine of Aq Ishan (Zengi-Baba) despite the fact that the Central Committee of the republic had already published two decrees obliging the authorities of the *raykom* to take the most energetic measures to stop the "scandalous manifestations of religious fanaticism".[64] However, two years later in 1982 a journalist from *Turkmenskaia Iskra* found that pilgrims were still visiting the same *mazar*.[65]

Soviet specialists advance contradictory figures concerning the total number of holy places in the Turkmen republic. Bayramsakhatov, who is among the more optimistic, mentions sixty-four non-registered houses of prayer and holy places", an obvious understatement.[66] Other specialists, more realistic, remark that "holy places are living

63. S.M. Demidov, "Perezhitki doislamskikh verovanii sredi Turkmen" in *Religioznye perezhitki i puti. . .*, op. cit., p. 137.
64. *Turkmenskaia Iskra* and *Sovet Turkmenistany* (Ashkhabad, 21 July 1979).
65. *Turkmenskaia Iskra* (Ashkhabad, 1 September 1981).
66. N. Bayramakhatov, "Proiavlenie", op. cit., p. 36.

institutions which may awake after a more or less long sleep and once again become active.'' Boyarov lists twenty important holy places and 360 of minor importance.[67] The following list is based on several recent Soviet inquiries, completed by numerous articles in the Turkmen press.

Holy places of Turkmenistan may be classified in the following four categories:

— Pre-Islamic holy places, former sanctuaries of heathen or Zoroastrian deities covered by a Muslim ''varnish''. Soviet specialists tend to exaggerate their importance, but today most of them seem to be abandoned.

— Tombs of rulers supposed to have possessed special virtues. The mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar is a typical example.

— Tombs of the ancestors, who may also (especially in the case of the ancestors of the Holy Tribes) be historical Sufi sheikhs. It may also happen that the ''ancestors'' are purely mythical beings, close to those of the first category.

— Tombs of Sufi sheikhs unrelated to a specific tribe: founders of brotherhoods, or ''*shahids*'' fallen in battle while fighting the infidels from the Mongols of Chingiz Khan (Najmuddin Kubra) to the Russians of Skobelev (Kurban Murat).

Pre-Islamic sanctuaries. In his *Kul't sviatykh v Islame*, V.N. Basilov gives a long list of these sanctuaries. Among those still enjoying a certain popularity, we may single out the mausoleum of Divana-i Burkh in Kunia-Urgench, a mythical saint taking the place of an old agrarian deity, protector of cattle; and the two *mazars* of Baba Gambar, supposedly the servant of the calife Ali, one in the mountains of Kopet Dagh, 20 km. south of Manych, in the Ashkhabad region, the other on the banks of the river Murghab in the district of Iolatan. Both are still active, according to *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 10 February 1982.

Mausoleums of the rulers. Soviet sources list three important holy places of this category, still frequented by pilgrims: the *mazar* of the Queen Turabek hanym and of the Sultan Atsyz Il-Arslan of Khorezm in Kunia-Urgench and the mausoleum of Sultan Sanjar in the district of Bayram Ali in the oasis of Mary. This last holy place is especially popular. Sultan Sanjar, the last of the great Seljuq emperors, represents

67. T. Boyarov, ''Sovremennoie sostoianie'', op. cit., p. 175.

for the Turkmens what Timur is for the Uzbeks: the model of a pious ruler, great conqueror and defender of Islam against the infidels (in his case the Buddhist Qara Khitais). In the 1980s the mausoleum was illegally restored by the believers and, according to the correspondent of *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, became "a meeting place of various charlatans, sheikhs, prophets and preachers".[68]

Tombs of tribal ancestors. The holy places of this category are the most active of all Turkmen holy places and the best protected against attempts by the authorities to close them. As a rule they are situated in the middle of working clan or tribal cemeteries and an intrusion of the authorities into these last, yet unviolated sanctuaries of popular Islam could call forth a violent reaction from the native population. To our knowledge, not a single one of these *mazars* has been transformed into an anti-religious monument since the Second World War. Because of their large number, we list here only the best known and the most active:

The *mazar* of Gözli Ata (of Hasan Ata), ancestor of the Ata tribe, who, according to a legend, was a disciple of Ahmed Yasawi. The *mazar* is a monument of the fourteenth century situated in the Balakhany mountains, 150 km. north of Krasnovodsk, and is still visited by numerous pilgrims according to G. Agaliev, secretary of the *Obkom* of Krasnovodsk, in *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 4 February 1982.

The *mazar* of Goch Murad Akhun in the district of Baharden, west of Ashkhabad.

The *mazar* of Mullah Qaqa, ancestor of the Saryq clan of the Elam tribe of the Yomud federation, in the district of Qyzyl Atrek.

The *mazar* of Atuali Baba, ancestor of the Sovrali clan of the Göklen federation in the district of Qara Qala.

The *mazar* of Ersary Baba, ancestor of the Ersary tribe in the Balakhany mountains.

The *mazar* of Pakyr Sheikh, a Yasawi saint, ancestor of the Shikh tribe in the village of Bendesen near the health resort of Mullah Qara in the district of Qyzyl Arvat, one of the most popular and most frequented Turkmen holy places. Still very active in 1982, according to G. Agaliev in *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 4 February 1982.

The *mazar* of Seyyid Nejepi (Najafi), ancestor of the Khoja tribe, in the

68. B. Yablokov and Iu. Iulin, "Sharlatany", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 3 April 1982.

village of Khoja Qala on the Sumbar river, Ashkhabad region.
The *mazar* of Salyr (or Salor) Gazan, ancestor of the Salor tribe, in the district of Serakhs, near the Iranian border.
The *mazar* of sheikh Sherep (Sheref), ancestor of the Khojas of Nokhur (a subdivision of the Khoja tribe) near the village of Nokhur, in the Akharden district of the Ashkhabad region. Another *mazar* of sheikh Sherep is in Urgench, Uzbek SSR.
The *mazar* of Khojagan Baba, another ancestor of the Khojas, on the Murghab river in the district of Takhta Bazar.
The *mazar* of Chopan Ata, a Yasawi saint, disciple of Ahmed Yasawi, ancestor of the Shikh tribe, in the Mangyshlaq peninsula; one of the most celebrated holy places of western Turkmenistan, still active in 1982 according to G. Agaliev in *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 4 February 1982.
The two *mazars* of Qara (Gara) Baba, another ancestor of the Shikh tribe, disciple of Ahmed Yasawi and protector of Caspian sea fishermen; one in the Krasnovodsk peninsula, the other on the lower Atrek, in the village of Bohurdak, district of Ashkhabad. The last was still active in 1981 according to T. Gongurov and S. Gulianov in *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 31 May 1981.
The *mazar* of Ismamut (Ysmamyt) Ata, ancestor of the Shikh tribe, on the territory of the *kolkhoz* "Kommuna" near Takhta Bazar in the Tashauz region. One of the most popular and active holy places of northern Turkmenistan according to Ya. Bayramov, secretary of the Takhta Bazar *raykom* in *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 27 May 1981.
The *mazar* of Göjüq Baba, yet another ancestor of the Shikh tribe, in the Lenin district (Tashauz region), second by order of prestige (after the *mazar* of Ismamut Ata) of all tribal shrines of northern Turkmenistan.
The *mazar* of Astana Baba, another ancestor of the Shikh tribe, on the territory of the *kolkhoz* "Krasnyi Oktiabr" in the district of Kerki (Charjow region) on the upper Amu-Darya near the Afghan border; one of the most venerated holy places of eastern Turkmenistan.
The *mazar* of Mahtum Azam Jurjani, ancestor of the Mahtum tribe, in the village Mahtum Qala in the district of Qara Qala; active in 1982, according to G. Agaliev in *Sovet Turkmenistany* 4 February 1982.
The two *mazars* of Ihsan Sheikh (sheikh Dana), a Yasawi saint, ancestor of the Müjevür tribe, one in the village of Aji Gui in the Balakhany mountains, the other in the Kuren Dagh mountains, both in the district of Kazanjik, Krasnovodsk region.
The *mazar* of the Sheikh Kemaletdin Husein Khorezmi, ancestor of

the Khojas of the Mangyshlaq peninsula in the Krasnovodsk region. The tomb of his dog "Baba Kuldash", honoured for its piety and wisdom, is also an object of pilgrimage (S.M. Demidov *Turkmenski Ovliady* Ashkhabad, 1976, p. 54, note 1).
The *mazar* of the sheikh Shibli Khorasani ("Shevlan"), another ancestor of the Khoja tribe, on Mount Sunt in the district of Qara Qala.
The *mazar* of the sheikh Ovezberdi, disciple of "Shevlan", in the village of Yuvan Qala.
The *mazar* of Qary (Gary) Alov, yet another ancestor of the Khojas, near the village of Murchi in western Turkmenistan.

Tombs of Sufi saints and of the shahids of the Holy War. The tombs of these historical or semi-legendary personnages are the most venerated of all Turkmen holy places, but they are also more vulnerable to attack because they are not protected by a specific clan or tribe. The following shrines have been mentioned recently in the Soviet press as "active" and as being frequented by pilgrims:

The *mazar* of Khoja Yusuf Hamadani, one of the greatest Sufi saints of Central Asia (died in 1140), founder of the Khwajagan *tariqat*, master of Ahmed Yasawi and of Najmuddin Kubra; in the city of Bayram Ali, in the region of Mary. The tomb is situated close to a working mosque and is therefore protected by the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia.
The *mazar* of Najmuddin Kubra (sheikh Kebir Ata), founder of the Kubrawiya brotherhood, in Kunia-Urgench; by far the most celebrated holy place of the Turkmen republic, frequented by pilgrims from all over Central Asia.[69]
The *mazar* of Aq Ishan ("Zengi Baba"), a semi-legendary Sufi saint, ancestor of the Bokusdat clan of the Tekke federation, near the health resort of Archman in the Baharden district of the Krasnovodsk region. This holy place seems to be particularly active. K. Ovezov[70] found near the *mazar* a hostel for pilgrims, and discovered to his great astonishment that the director of the Baharden school (a Communist Party member) used the school bus for transporting the pilgrims. In July 1979 M.N. Gapurov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of

69. T. Boyarov, op. cit., p. 181.
70. K. Ovezov, *Vliianie*. . ., op. cit., p. 70.

the Communist Party of Turkmenistan, blamed the *raykom* of Baharden for its inability to put an end to the pilgrimage;[71] in 1982 the holy place was still visited by numerous pilgrims according to *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 4 February 1982.

The *mazar* of Bilal Baba, another legendary Sufi saint, supposedly *ezzanchi* (caller to the prayer) of the Prophet Mohammed, in the village of Shambe-Bazar in the district of Denau on the middle Amu-Darya.

The tomb of Kurban Murat in the village of Dinli Qala near Gök Tepe. Kurban Murat, a Naqshbandi sheikh, was one of the leading figures of the resistance of the Ahal-Teke tribe to the Russians at Gök Tepe, but escaped the massacre following the Russian assault on 12 January 1881. His *mazar*, already an object of pilgrimage before the Revolution, had been "reactivated" in the 1960s by one of his descendants (also a Naqshbandi sheikh). The popularity of the holy place is due to the nationalistic and anti-Russian character of the pilgrimage. The long resistance of the Teke tribesmen to the Russian conquest is well remembered by the Turkmens as a glorious page of their history, and Kurban Murat is for the Turkmens what Shamil is for the Caucasians. In 1972 600 pilgrims visited the *mazar* during the Kurban Bayram festival. Ten years later, in January 1982, two Turkmen historians, Annapesov and S. Saparov, were mobilised to denounce in the Turkmen press "the dangerous clerical agitation around the shrine" and to present Kurban Murat, against all historical evidence, as a traitor and a coward.[72]

The *mazar* of "Saragt (Serakhs) Baba", pseudonym of the Yasawi saint Abul Fazl, in the district of Serakhs, Ashkhabad region, near the Iranian border. It was active in 1982 according to *Sovet Turkmenistany*, 10 February 1982.

The *mazar* of Fahretdin Razi, a Sufi saint, in Kunia-Urgench. The popularity of this holy place was violently denounced in February 1982 in the Turkmen press.[73]

The *mazar* of the sheikh Abu Ali Dakkak ("sheikh Alov") a Yasawi saint of the early twelfth century, near the village of Bagir in the Kopet Dagh mountains, not far from the capital, Ashkhabad. This is

71. *Turkmenskaia Iskra* (Ashkhabad, 21 July 1979).
72. M. Annapesov and S. Saparov, "Podlinnoe litso ishana — Pravda o sviatykh mestakh", *Turkmenskaia Iskra* and *Sovet Turkmenistany* (Ashkhabad, 9 January 1982).
73. A. Hasametdinov, "Razvenchennye legendy", *Turkmenskaia Iskra* (Ashkhabad, 24 February 1982).

one of the oldest Turkmen shrines, famous since the Middle Ages. The holy place underwent a long period of decay in the nineteenth century, but was "reactivated" in the early twentieth century by Naqshbandi missionaries from Bukhara. The *mazar* suffered from the 1948 earthquake but believers restored it. The pilgrimage remained intense until the late 1960s, attracting the Sunnis (Turkmens) as well as the Shi'as (Persians and Kurds). Until the late 1960s the *mazar* had a permanent guardian (*müjevür*), who was a Naqshbandi sheikh and who performed the religious rites. The guardian was then expelled, and since then the guardianship is assumed periodically by volunteers. After the suppression ofthe *müjevür* there were fewer pilgrims, but, as Demidov writes, "the pilgrimage may be reactivated any time by the strengthening of religious propaganda" ("Mavzolei u podnozhiia Kopet Daga — Pravda o sviatykh mestakh", *Turkmenskaia Iskra*, 2 March 1983). Demidov expresses the hope that in the future the shrine will be included among the historical-archaeological national monuments of Nyssa, on which territory it is situated, and that this may facilitate the progress of anti-religious work.

Kirghizia

Together with Turkmenistan, Kirghizia is the area where the veneration of holy places has the greatest influence on religious life. This may be explained by several factors. First of these is the relatively late conversion of the Kirghiz to Islam, which took place between the early seventeenth century and the first quarter of the eighteenth century, when the ancestors of the Kirghiz, only superficially Muslim, were expelled from their original homeland by the Jungars. They settled in the eastern part of the Ferghana valley were they came in contact with the sedentary and deeply religious local population (Uzbeks and Tajiks), under whose influence the southern (Ferghana) Kirghiz clans had already become thoroughly Islamised by the eve of the Revolution, while those of northern Kirghizia (the Kirghiz of Tian-Shan) remained superficially Muslim. This distinction still exists today, and explains why Sufism in northern Kirghizia remains most influenced by shamanistic practices.

Secondly, the Islamisation of the Kirghiz was due exclusively to the organised missionnary activity of the Sufi brotherlands, Yasawi in the beginning and Naqshbandiya later. The Yasawi missionnaries penetrated into the present-day territory of Kirghizia from Kazakhstan

along the Syr Darya valley. The Naqshbandis came from two different areas: Kashgar and Kokand. Mambetaliev, the leading expert on Islam in Kirghizia, writes: "It is under the guise of *muridism* that Islam penetrated among the Kirghiz."[74]

Thirdly, Kirghiz society has preserved up till the present its clan structure, as in the Chechen country or in Turkmenistan, and the clans serve as the basis for Sufi organisations. The cult of the tribal ancestors and its corollary, the veneration of the holy places, remains an essential element of popular Islam.

Fourthly, the eastern part of the Ferghana valley, a border area between the sedentary Uzbeks and Tajiks and the nomads, has been one of the most active religious centres of Central Asia since the Middle Ages. The city of Osh, called by the Turkestanis "the second Mecca", has been and still is one of the main centres of Central Asian Sufism.

The holy places of Kirghizia may be classified in the following categories: 1. clan or tribal holy places, tombs of more or less mythical ancestors and of historical or legendary heroes; 2. shrines tied to the memory of Biblical prophets (Suleyman, Yunus, Shamun, Ayub, Idris), which conceal various pre-Islamic deities; and 3. tombs of the Sufi sheikhs and of the *shahids* of holy war. The majority of the holy places are situated in the Osh region of southern Kirghizia. Very active before the Second World War, some used to attract large numbers of pilgrims from all areas of Central Asia. The majority were closed or destroyed during the great anti-religious campaign of 1956-64; some have been transformed into anti-religious museums or health resorts. According to the recent Soviet sources and the testimony of some rare foreign visitors, the pilgrimage continues though on a more modest scale.[75]

74. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki nekotorykh musul'manskikh techenii v Kirghizii i ikh istoriia* (Frunze, 1969), p. 22.
75. Several studies have been devoted to the holy places in Kirghizia. The most important are: Iu.G. Petrash, "Materialy o perezhitkakh doislamskikh kul'tov na iuge Kirghizii", *Filosofskie problemy ateizma* (Moscow, 1963), pp. 264-5; by the same author, *Sviatye mesta obmana* (Frunze, 1961); T. Baialieva, *Religioznye perezhitki v Kirghizii i ikh preodolenie* (Frunze, 1981); S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit; by the same author, *Sufizm zhana anyng Qyrgyzstandagy agymdary* ("Sufism and its trends in Kirghizia"), (Frunze, 1972, in Kirghiz); S.B. Dorzhenov, *Islam bügünkü kündä* ("Islam today") (Frunze, 1980, in Kirghiz); and the collective work *Din zhana dinii qaldyqtar* ("Religion and religious survivals") (Frunze, 1969, in Kirghiz).

The most famous of all holy places is the so called "Throne of Solomon" (Takht-e Suleyman) at the summit of a small mountain in the outskirts of Osh. Before the Revolution and even before the Second World War, enormous flocks of pilgrims used to visit the shrine, especially in July-September and November-December.[76] A visit to the Throne of Solomon was deemed by the inhabitants of the Ferghana to be equal in value to a pilgrimage to Mecca. M. Abramzon, one of the leading Soviet anthropologists, calls Osh "the main centre of religious obscurantism [*mrakobesiia*] of all Central Asia".[77] The shrine was closed several times during Stalin's reign and was "reactivated" by the "reactionary clericals" during the war. In the late 1950s thousands of pilgrims used to visit the Throne of Salomon,[78] but in 1958-9 it was the object of a violent propaganda campaign. Bayalieva reproduced a number of articles published in the local press, *Leninskii Put'* and *Leninchi Yolu* of Osh, attacking the pilgrimage to the shrine; political-educational meetings were organised by the *gorkom* and the *gorispolkom* of Osh; and a representative of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia, a certain Shafagat Khoja Khalyqnazarov, published several articles in *Leninskii Put'* asking the Soviet authorities to put an end to the pilgrimage "in the name of Islamic orthodoxy". A special *fetwa* was published by the mufti of Tashkent condemning the pilgrimage as "sinful".[79] Public discussions took place in the presence of 7,000 believers in the four working mosques of Osh to denounce the pilgrimage as a "pre-Islamic superstition".[80] However, Bayalieva notes that all this effort was wasted because it was focused on the inhabitants of the city of Osh, while the mainstream of pilgrims came from the countryside.[81] In 1960 during the festival of Kurban Bayram, 1,500 to 2,000 pilgrims visited the Throne of Solomon.

A second campaign was launched in 1963. The *gorkom* of Osh proceeded to destroy the little shrine marking the centre of the holy place;[82] the area around became a "park of rest", with a "museum of

76. S. Aristanbekov, "K voprosu prisposoblenchestva Islama v sovremennykh usloviiakh" in *Religiia, svobodomyslie, ateizm* (Frunze, 1967), p. 62.
77. S.M. Abramzon, *Kirghizy i ikh etnograficheskie i istoriko-kul'turnye sviazi* (Leningrad, 1971), p. 72.
78. T. Bayalieva, op. cit., p. 62.
79. Ibid., p. 64.
80. Iu.G. Petrash, *Sviatye mesta obmana*, op. cit., p. 21.
81. T. Bayalieva, op. cit., p. 66.
82. Text of the Osh *obkom* decree in *Protiv religioznogo obmana i mrakobesiia* (Frunze, 1970), pp. 47-8.

applied arts'' in the centre, a euphemistic expression noting an anti-religious museum. However, Bayalieva maintains that the pilgrims, though less numerous, continue to visit the holy place. In the spring of 1981 an Afghan visitor observed numerous young Kirghiz couples, including students, attending prayers which guardians of the museum were helping them to perform correctly.

Among the other holy places of Kirghizia, the most popular are the following:

The *gumbez* (Kirghiz expression for *mazar*) of Arslan Ata, in the district of Bazar Kurgan. After the Throne of Salomon, this tomb of the mythical ancestor of the Kirghiz nation is one of the most famous of southern Kirghizia. In 1950 the *rayispolkom* of Bazar Kurgan decided to transform the shrine into an anti-religious museum, but in the 1960s pilgrims were still brought to the holy place ''by dozens and even by hundreds of trucks''.[83] On 29 July 1964 the *obkom* of Osh ordered the destruction of the shrine,[84] but since then the holy place has been regularly mentioned in the Kirghiz press as one of the main centres of ''fanatical obscurantists''. According to S. Mambetaliev, it is controlled by the adepts of the ''Hairy Ishans'' brotherhood.[85]

The *gumbez* of Kirghiz Ata (''the Father of the Kirghiz''), another mythical ancestor of the Kirghiz nation, in the district of Naukot. In the 1920s it was one of the most active centres of the Basmachi movement in the Ferghana valley.

Other holy places are related to the Biblical prophets. Among the most popular are the tomb of Shamun Nabi (the prophet Samson); the tomb and the sacred spring of Hazrat Daud (King David) on the banks of the river Qara Darya; the tomb of Idris Peyghamber (the prophet Enoch) on the territory of the *sovkhoz* ''Chatkal'' near the village of Yangi Bazar, district of Ala Buka in the Osh region; and the tomb and sacred spring of Hazrat Ayub (the prophet Job) near Jelalabad. This last was transformed into a ''Park of Health and Culture'' in 1959 but, according to Petrash, ''pilgrims continue to visit the shrine in great numbers.'' On 16 May 1959 the *gorsovet* of Jelalabad proclaimed the pilgrimage illegal, supposedly at the request of the believers of Jelalabad and Jizak.[86] However, Petrash acknowledges that the

83. Iu. G. Petrash, *Sviatye mesta obmana*, op. cit., pp. 71 and 73.
84. Text of the decree in *Protiv religioznogo obmana*, op. cit., pp. 48-9.
85. S. Mambetaliev, *Perezhitki*, op. cit., p. 38. The village of Arslanbob was the centre of the ''Hairy Ishans'' in the 1960s. The text concerning the arrest and trial of the ''Hairy Ishans'' is in *Protiv religioznogo obmana*, op. cit., pp. 159-63.
86. Iu. G. Petrash, *Sviatye mesta*, op. cit., p. 41.

pilgrimage is going on and that "hereditary sheikhs" (probably Yasawis) have infiltrated the new Park of Culture, where some are employed as guardians and others as medical orderlics and cooks.[87]

The last category of holy places is related directly to Sufism and to the expansion of the defence of Islam. To this group belong the following important holy places:

The *mazar* of Aq Taylaq Ata near the village of Bazar Kurgan. The saint is a *shahid* who fought the infidels (probably the Buddhist Jungars). In August 1960 an assembly of 600 believers in the mosque of Bazar Kurgan voted a resolution demanding that the local authorities should put an end to the pilgrimage because it opposed Islamic orthodoxy. However, the pilgrims "are still coming from Uzbekistan and from Tajikistan."[88]

The *mazar* of Fazil Shah, 10 km. from the village of Ala Buka. The tomb is surrounded by the tombs of 2,700 Arab warriors who, according to a Kirghiz legend, fell in battle against the infidels. In the early 1950s, 1,500 to 2,000 pilgrims used to visit the shrine during the festival of Kurban Bayram and by 1959 the number had risen to 4,000.[89] In August 1964 the *obkom* of Osh ordered the destruction of the *mazar*, and an account of the successful operation was published in the *Sovetskaia Kirgizia* (20 August 1964) by Iu. Petrash and G. Gafurov. Yet the pilgrims still come in great numbers. In 1982 an article in *Leninshil Jas*, the Komsomol paper of Frunze, described the flocks of pilgrims coming from all parts of Kirghizia and from Uzbekistan.[90]

The *mazar* of Ismanali Ishan, a Sufi saint who died in the late nineteenth century, in the valley of Apshir Ata, 30 km. from Naukot.

The *mazar* of Hazrat Kontaji, in the valley of Qara Qystaq, in the centre of an important Muslim cemetery. It was frequented by pilgrims in 1980.[91]

In Kirghizia, anti-religious literature is focused almost exclusively on the cult of the holy places. The comparison between the literature of the 1950s and that of the 1980s shows that despite the serious efforts

87. Ibid., pp. 84-91.
88. Ibid., pp. 82-3.
89. Ibid., pp. 61-2.
90. M. Tentimishev, "Zhalpy kuch-araket kerek" ("The need for a common effort"), *Leninshil Jas* (Frunze, 25 November 1982).
91. A. Pecherskii, "U vysokoi Archi", *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow, 1980, I), pp. 29-30.

to put an end to the "manifestation of medieval obscurantism", the same holy places as were denounced thirty years ago and have been closed several times by the authorities are still frequented today. For instance, a recent article by B. Abdukarimov, "Ateistik tarbiya" (Ateistic culture) in *Mugallader Gazetasy*, Frunze, August 1982, describes the activity of "fanatical obscurantists" around the holy places of Bazar Kurgan and the *mazars* of Hazrat Daud and Arslan Baba,[92] which were already unmasked, closed or destroyed several times in the 1950s, '60s and '70s.

It is noteworthy that the problem of the holy places and of the Muslim cemeteries is the central point of the last novel of the great Kirghiz writer, Chingiz Aytmatov, *A Day Longer than a Century*. The conflict between the traditional past, the dreary present and the even worse future is symbolised by the destruction of the *mazar* of Ana Beyit, the mythical ancestress of the Nayman tribe and of the tribal cemetery surrounding it, to be replaced by a space station.[93]

Karakalpakistan

According to Soviet sources, the area south of the Aral Sea (Karakalpak ASSR), a borderland between the sedentary and the nomadic worlds, has been traditionally one of the most religious territories of Central Asia. In 1914 there were 553 mosques. Today their total number cannot exceed one dozen, yet the parallel, popular Islam remains very much alive, especially in the northern district of the republic, where the majority of the holy places are located. The three native Central Asian *tariqa* — the Naqshbandiya, the Kubrawiya, and the Yasawiya — are well represented. As a rule the holy places are situated in the middle of Muslim cemeteries, a fact which makes their destruction by the authorities more difficult.[94] Their guardians are generally Sufi sheikhs or senior *murids*.[95] According to recent Soviet publications, the pilgrimage is still intense.[96]

92. B. Abdukarimov, "Ateistik tarbiia" ("Atheist culture"), *Mugaller Gazetasy* (Frunze, 27 August 1982).
93. Chingiz Aytmatov, *Burannyi polustanok i dol'she veka dlitsia den'* (Moscow, 1981).
94. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia naseleniia Sotsialisticheskoi Karakalpakii* (Nukus, 1973), p. 139.
95. Kh.E. Esbergenov, "Ob izuchenii religioznykh verovanii Karakalpakov" in *Konkretnye issledovaniia sovremennykh religioznykh verovanii* (Moscow, 1967), p. 204.
96. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Opyt sotsiologicheskogo izucheniia ateizma i religii,* (Nukus, 1979), pp. 92-3).

Dzh. Bazarbaev, the leading expert on Islam in Karakalpakistan, places the holy places of this republic in the following three categories:
— *The Tombs of Sufi sheikhs*, e.g. the *mazar* of Ishan Qala, near the city of Khalqabad; the *mazar* of Qaraqum Ishan and the *mazar* of Daud Ata in the district of Kungrad. This last shrine is surrounded by the cemetery of the Tabyn tribe. In 1973 Bazarbaev observed that because of the prestige of the saint, the dead were brought to the cemetery for burial from all regions of the autonomous republic.[97]
— *Historical monuments*. The most important is the shrine of Mazlumkhan Sulu, a masterpiece of thirteenth-century architecture, in the district of Khojeili. According to Bazarbaev, this shrine was one of the most popular and most venerated holy places after the Second World War, but the pilgrimage ceased in the 1960s when the "monument was restored and when the anti-religious propagandists had proved its non-religious character."[98] This optimistic view is contradicted by another Karakalpak expert, T. Davletbaev, who discovered that the shrine was still frequented in the late 1970s.[99]
— *Mazars of historical or imaginary personalities*. The most famous of these is the *mazar* of Sultan Vais Baba, supposedly the tomb of Uweis al-Qarani, a Yemeni saint, contemporary of the Prophet, in the district of Biruni. Before the Second World War it was one of the most venerated holy places of all Central Asia and the centre of an active pilgrimage. In 1959 or 1960 all the holy places in the republic were closed "to satisfy the public opinion of the population", and those possessing an artistic value were placed under the protection of the republican Ministry of Culture.[100] In May 1971, however, during the festival of Uraza Bayram, the shrine was visited by more than 2,000 pilgrims, including 350 students.[101] Twenty years after the dramatic decision of the authorities to destroy "centres of obscurantism" once and for all, Bazarbaev recognised that the *mazar* of Sultan Vais was still a meeting place for the believers who, under the guidance of "fanatical parasites", performed religious ceremonies (probably *zikr*) and offered

97. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Sekuliarizatsiia*, op. cit., p. 140. According to T. Davlatbaev, *Aulielarga sighimish va uning zararlari* ("The cult of the saints and its dangers"), (Tashkent, 1979), p. 21 (in Uzbek), this holy place was still active in the late 1970s.
98. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Opyt*, op. cit., p. 93.
99. T. Davlatbaev, op. cit., p. 21.
100. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Opyt*, op. cit., pp. 94-5.
101. N. Ashirov, *Islam i natsii* (Moscow, 1975), p. 65.

sacrifices.[102] In 1979 T. Davletbaev found the holy place still very active,[103] and in 1983 G.P. Snesarev published a special article on this holy place in *Nauka i Religiia (no. 8, 1983, p. 33-6, "Khorezmskie sviatye mesta — Sultan Vais.")*

Among other holy places in the republic we should mention:

The *mazar* of Narimjan Baba, in the district of Turtkul.
The *mazar* of Tokmak Ata near the city of Muinak.
The *mazar* of Shamun Nabi (the prophet Samson) in the village of Mizdakhkan in the district of Khojeili. In 1966, "in order to satisfy the demand of local public opinion" and "given the recrudescence of religious agitation led by the clerical fanatics and the religious activists", the local authorities ordered that the shrine be opened and destroyed "to prove its mythical and non-Islamic character". The destruction of the shrine provoked consternation among the population: 3,000 people visited the *mazar* during the demolition and the guardian sheikh "tried to provoke an explosion of fanaticism".[105] After the destruction the number of visitors dropped dramatically. In 1970, only forty-five persons visited the holy place during Kurban Bayram, but Bazarbaev confesses that such brutal measures are the result of exceptional circumstances and cannot be considered as normal. "They are not effective and may easily become dangerously counter-productive."[106]

In 1972, because of the increased interest in the holy places, Bazarbaev published a new book, specially devoted to the denunciation of the "obnoxious character" of several holy places which had already previously been denounced and officially destroyed.[107]

Tajikistan

In Tajikistan, an old sedentary country where the clan and tribal structures disappeared long ago, Sufi brotherhoods are less active and

102. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Opyt*, op. cit., p. 96.
103. T. Davlatvaev, op. cit., p. 11.
104. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Opyt*, op. cit., p. 94.
105. Ibid., p. 95.
106. Ibid., p. 96.
107. J.B. Bazarbaev, *Auliyeliklerding syrarlary* ("The secrets of the holy places"), (Nukus, 1972, in Karakalpak).

play a relatively minor role in the preservation of the religious feelings of the population. In this republic the holy places are less numerous and enjoy but a moderate prestige among the believers and the unbelievers. The religious life of the Tajiks is less dependent on parallel Islam[108] and for this reason the role of the holy *mazars* is lesser than in Turkmenistan or Kirghizia. In 1971, however, a Tajik anti-religious expert noted that 10 per cent of the believers used to make pilgrimages to the holy places of the republic.[109]

The most popular holy place is the tomb of Yaqub Charkhi, a Naqshbandi sheikh, disciple of Khoja Ahrar, native of the Logar province in Afghanistan. The *mazar* is in the village of Gissar (Hissar) on the outskirts of Dushanbe. It enjoys legal status, under the control of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia, and a working mosque functions nearby. However, in 1983 an American visitor found both the *mazar* and the mosque closed.

In 1961-2 all other important holy places of Tajikistan were destroyed by the authorities or transformed into "parks of rest and culture" or sanatoria.[110] This was the case of the following holy places:

The *mazar* of Balagardan, a mythical being, probably a Zoroastrian deity, in the valley of Varzob, district of Regar.
The *mazar* of Mohammed Bashara a Sufi saint, near the city of Panjikent.
The *mazar* of Khoja Ab-i Garm, another old Zoroastrian deity, in the Lenin district near Dushanbe.
The *mazar* of Imam Zein ul-Abeddin, the son of Imam Husein and the sole survivor of the Kerbela massacre, in the district of Shaartuz, Kugan-Tube region.
The *mazar* of Khoja Sabzpush ("the Master who makes the vegetation grow"). Yet another Zoroastrian deity, in the district of Aini, Leninabad region.

Three years after the destruction of these holy places a Tajik expert,

108. The most detailed description of the holy places in Tajikistan is in A. Safarov, *Paidosh va mohiyat-i ichtimo-i darvish* ("The origin and the social essence of the dervishes"), (Dushambe, 1975, in Tajik).
109. A. Bazarov, *Nekotorye osobennosti i puti formirovaniia ateisticheskogo mirovozreniia Tadzhikskogo dekhanstva* (Dushambe, 1971), pp. 85-6.
110. A Kadyrov, *Prichiny sushchestvovaniia i puti preodoleniia perezhitkov Islama* (Leninabad, 1966), p. 29.

A. Kadyrov, noted that "because of the weakening of the vigilance of the local authorities and because of the insufficient educational work . . . various parasites, clerics, vagabond mullahs, ishans and other crooks" are once again organising pilgrimages to some holy places now officially closed, in particular to the *mazars* of Balagardan, Zein ul-Abeddin and Khoja Ab-i Garm.[111] The reactivisation of the pilgrimage to the holy places has been confirmed by other anti-religious specialists, in 1967 by M. Mullaev[112] and in 1975 by A. Safarov[113], who complained that "pilgrims are still coming in great numbers especially to those holy places which have been transformed into "parks of rest and culture".

Other holy places are mentioned in the Tajik anti-religious literature, but we do not know if they are still active or not:

The *mazar* of mullah Junayd, in the village of Gissar near Dushanbe.
The *mazar* of Khoja Hamadani in or near the city of Kuliab.
The *mazar* of Khoja Tajeddin, a Sufi saint, in the district of Danara, district of Kuliab.
The *mazar* of Khoja Aref Revgari, a Sufi saint in or near the city of Regar.
The *mazar* of Khoja Takaburt, a pre-Islamic deity, in the mountains of the Kanibadam district, Leninabad region.

Ismaili holy places in the Autonomous Region of Gorno-Badakhshan. Soviet sources mention several holy places in the mountainous region of the Pamirs (Gorno-Badakhshan AR), which are especially venerated by the local Ismaili population. They are generally related to the memory of the great Ismaili poet and saint, Nasir-i Khosrow. Two have been mentioned recently: the sacred springs of Garm Chashma ("hot waters") and Chashman-i Nasir ("Nasir's springs"). Both used to attract great numbers of pilgrims and both have been transformed, probably in 1982, the first into a health resort (*kurort*) and the second into a park of culture, with a movie theatre, a club, a restaurant and a library, where "members of the local intelligentsia are conducting important educational [read "anti-religious"] work."[114]

111. Ibid., p. 31.
112. M. Mullaev, *Proizkhozhdenie i reaktsionnaia sushchnost' Shariata*, (Dushambe, 1967), p. 177.
113. A. Safarov, op. cit., p. 51, *passim*.
114. D. Kundusov, "U byvshikh istochnikov", *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow, 1982), p. 43.

Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan

Uzbekistan, an old sedentary country with a brilliant urban civilisation, appears as an exception among Central Asian republics. It is the most populous republic and all important historical and cultural centres of Turkestan are in its teritory: Bukhara, Samarkand, Khiva, Kokand, Tashkent, Urgench, Namangan and Shahrisabz, to name only the best-known. Tashkent is the seat of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia and Kazakhstan, and the only two Islamic educational institutions in the Soviet Union, the *medressehs* of Mir-i Arab and Imam Ismail al-Bukhari, are in Bukhara and Tashkent. Uzbekistan is a model Muslim republic, the one which is shown to foreign Muslim visitors, and compared to other Central Asian republics, official Islam in Uzbekistan enjoys a privileged position. The number of working mosques in Uzbekistan may be estimated at around 150, as against less than twenty in Tajikistan and only four in Turkmenistan in 1982.[115]

However, it would be a mistake to believe that the level of religious feeling among the Uzbek population is higher than among the Turkmen or the Kirghiz. The number of working mosques does not correspond necessarily to the intensity of religious feeling, but the official Islam, represented by the registered clerics and controlled (appointed and remunerated) by the Spiritual Board of Tashkent, is in a better position to satisfy the spiritual needs of the believers. As a consequence, parallel Islam, represented by the Sufi ishans and the vagabond mullahs, does not play the role of compensator which it does in the other Turkestani republics where the numbers of registered clerics and of working mosques is insufficient. In Uzbekistan, the working mosque with its *imam-khatib*, and not the holy *mazar* with its Sufi sheikh-guardian, is still the real centre of the spiritual and religious life of the believers.

However, the cult of the saints and pilgrimages to their tombs remain one of the essential elements of the popular piety of the Uzbeks. The violence of the attacks against the veneration of the holy places (with the cautious support of the official Islamic leaders) testifies to the vitality of the holy places in Uzbekistan,[116] as does also the

115. A. Bazarov, op. cit., p. 95.
116. Among several others, Sharaf Rashidov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Uzbekistan, at the seventh plenum of the Central

abundant anti-religious literature focused on the cult of the saints and on the pilgrimage to their *mazars*.[117]

On 7 February 1969 the Council of the Ministers of the Uzbek SSR published a special decree "on the strengthening of control over the legislation concerning the religious cults": among other recommendation, this decree invited the local (*oblast* and *rayon*) authorities to "put an end to the pilgrimage to the so-called holy places".[118]

A complete list of the holy places of Uzbekistan has not been compiled, and we therefore mention here only the most important:

The (mythical) *mazar* of Ali (the fourth Calif), in Shahimardan (today Hamzaabad), in the district of Ferghana, in the Ferghana valley. Iu. Petrash[119] describes as follows the recent history of this holy place: severely damaged in February 1919 during the fighting against the Basmachis, the *mazar* was repaired in 1924 by the local "fanatics" and once again became "a nest of charlatans and parasites". In March 1928 the Uzbek communist Hamza Niyazi, the first native to attack Islam publicly, was killed at the holy place by the outraged population. The *mazar* was destroyed by the authorities, rebuilt in the 1930s by the "fanatics", and closed once again in 1940. In its stead was built an anti-religious museum and a park of rest and culture. Despite these administrative efforts, Shahimardan in the 1960s was still "one of the most popular holy places of all Central Asia, where every day dozens of lorries used to bring pilgrims."[120] In 1978 T. Saidbaev observed the

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Committee in *Pravda Vostoka* (Tashkent, 13 July 1963) and the *fetwa* of the mufti Ziautdin Babakhanov of Tashkent in *Muslims of the Soviet East* (Tashkent, 1981, II) (English edn).

117. There are several relatively objective surveys of Islam in Uzbekistan, especially T.S. Saidbaev, *Islam i obshchestvo* (Moscow, 1978); the other surveys are less scientific and more "propagandistic": O.A. Sukhareva, *Islam v Uzbekistane* (Tashkent, 1960), Isa Jabarov, *Obshchestvennyi progress, byt i religiia* (Tashkent, 1973); G.P. Snesarev, *Relikty domusul'manskikh verovanii i obriadov u Uzbekov Khorezma* (Moscow, 1969), especially chapter 5, pp. 266-307; the collective work *Domusul'manskiia verovaniia i obriady v Srednei Azii* (Moscow 1975) and the pamphlet of E. Sharipov and A. Bazarov, *Mukaddas joilar tughrisida hakikat* ("The truth about the holy places") (Tashkent, 1976, in Uzbek) on the holy places in the Ferghana valley.
118. V. Kuroedov and A.S. Pankratov (eds), *Zakonodatel'stvo o religioznykh kul'takh* (*Sbornik materialov i dokumentov*), 2nd edn (Moscow, 1971), pp. 230-1.
119. Iu. G. Petrash, *Sviatye mesta*, op. cit., pp. 44-51.
120. Ibid., pp. 44-5.

importance of the pilgrimage (under the cover of tourism), with public prayers and sacrifices.[121] A year later, in 1979, another expert, T. Davlatbaev, remarked that the *mazar* of Shahimardan was still very active.[122]

An abundant anti-religious literature especially devoted to Shahimardan leaves no doubt as to its importance. In his recent novel *Hamza* the Uzbek writer Kamil Yashen describes, in the darkest colours, a Yasawi *zikr* which takes place at the *mazar*. Two chapters of this novel have been published in *Nauka i religiia.*[123]

The *mazar* of Bahautdin Naqshband, the founder of the Naqshbandi brotherhood, in the neighbourhood of Bukhara.

The *mausoleum* of Qusam ibn Abbas, the uncle of the Prophet, known as *Shah-i Zenda* (''the living Lord'') in Samarkand.

These two shrines are, after the *mazar* of Shahimardan, among the most celebrated holy places of Central Asia. According to T. Saidbaev, ''because of their great artistic value, both were placed under the protection of the State and transformed into anti-religious museums'', but the pilgrimages continue. In 1982 and in 1985 a French tourist known to the authors saw numerous visitors praying at the shrine of Shah-i Zenda, in the presence of local militiamen who pretended to ignore this ''manifestation of obscurantism''.

The *mazar* of Palvan Pir, in Khiva. It was active until 1959, then placed under the control of the Department of Historical Monuments of the Uzbek SSR and transformed into a ''Museum of the Revolution''. According to a Soviet expert, the pilgrims who continue to visit the holy place are invited to listen to anti-religious lectures.[124]

The *mazar* of Khojami Kabri of Namangan, in the Ferghana valley, transformed in 1963 into an anti-religious museum and, since then, one of the most active centres of anti-Islamic propaganda in Central Asia. During the first seven months of 1965 it was visited by 25,000 persons, but we do not know whether they were atheists or pilgrims.[125] In 1981, two Uzbek *agitpropshchiki* complained that ''too many pilgrims were visiting the so-called holy places in the Namangan

121. T.S. Saidbaev, op. cit., p. 210.
122. T. Davlatbaev, op. cit., pp. 8-9.
123. *Nauka i religiia*, 1982, V, pp. 81-4 and 1982, VII, pp. 46-53.
124. A. Kadyrov, *Prichiny*, op. cit., p. 149.
125. Ibid., pp. 149-50.

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region,''[126] but we do not know whether their remark includes the *mazar* of Khojami Kabri or not.

The *mazar* of Ahmed Yasawi, the mystic poet, founder of the Yasawiya *tariqat*, in the city of Turkistan (formerly Yasy) in southern Kazakhstan. The *mazar* is a masterpiece of 14th-15th century architecture, and as such was placed under the protection of the state and became something between an anti-religious museum and park of culture, if we are to believe an ambiguous article published by Yahya Beisenbaev, the *qadi* of Kazakhstan in the official organ of the Muslim Spiritual Board of Central Asia, *Les Musulmans de l'Orient Soviétique* (French edition), 1975, no. 3, pp. 4-5:

> The Muslims [of the city of Turkistan] are grateful to the government of the Kazakh republic for taking care of the mausoleum of Khoja Ahmed Yasawi. Important restoration work is in process in order to repair this historical shrine. A hotel is under construction, as well as an area of rest and recreation for the comfort of the numerous visitors who come to this place, so dear to the heart of every Muslim.

It is impossible to say if these ''visitors'' are simply tourists or if they are pilgrims.

Note on the holy places in Tatarstan

Soviet sources are almost completely silent on the current situation of holy places in the Tatar and Bashkir republics. Recently only one small item of information by R.G. Baltanov appeared in his *Sotsiologicheskie problemy v sisteme nauchno-ateisticheskogo vospitaniia — Problemy konkretno-sotsiologicheskogo analiza religii i ateizma v SSSR*, Kazan, 1973, p. 182. The author remarks that ''sociological surveys are conducted regularly in the Tatar ASSR concerning the pilgrimages, the holy places and Muslim cemeteries.''

126. Kh. Nagiev and M. Khadzhimirzaev, ''Uchityvaia mestnye osobennosti'', *Nauka i religiia* (Moscow, 1981, V), p. 30.

APPENDIX B

SOVIET SOURCES ON SUFISM IN THE SOVIET UNION

What is the role of the Sufi brotherhoods in the persistence, or the revival, of this xenophobic conservative trend in Soviet Islam? It seems that the Soviet experts themselves are still unable to give a clear answer, and their ignorance partly explains the growing number of sociological surveys conducted on this subject in almost all the Soviet Muslim republics in recent years.

In the West the same question is being debated today by many students of Soviet affairs. To some the issue appears superfluous, but this is unfortunate because in reality it encompasses two vitally important aspects of the nationalities problem in the Soviet Union: the role of the Muslim religion in the national awareness, and therefore in the nationalism, of the Muslim peoples; and Islam's role in Soviet foreign policy, in which it may be either an asset or a liability.

Some Western experts take the possible impact of fundamentalist Islam, and hence the Sufi brotherhoods, in the Soviet Union seriously. These specialists — among whom we place ourselves — believe that in the next two decades the national question will present a crucial challenge to the Soviet regime and that the problem presented by the Muslims will probably be the most challenging of all. They also believe that Islam remains the main psychological bond of unity between the various Turkic, Iranian and Caucasian nationalities, and that it is the greatest, if not the only, obstacle to the desired Soviet process of "getting nearer" (*sblizenie*) and "merging" (*sliyanie*) of all the Soviet nationalities into one "International community of New Soviet Men".

We believe that Islam has survived mainly because of the resistance offered by the well-organised and dedicated representatives of the conservative "parallel Islam" rather than because of the activity of the official Muslim establishment, which is loyal to the Soviet regime. Those who oppose this view usually believe that the religious problem in the Soviet Union is a marginal one; they tend to minimise the national problem as a whole, believing either that the process of russification (or "sovietisation") of minority élites is already so well advanced that nothing can stop or reverse it, or that Soviet Muslims have acquired a sufficiently attractive stake in the "system" that disaffection can now only be the preserve of some radical minority

individuals. These same observers will usually admit that Islam may still be alive and that it may even be fighting a rearguard action, but that it is now losing its meaning in face of the constellation of "modernising" forces marshalled by the Soviet Russians against it. Implicit, and frequently explicit, in this argument is the idea that a residue of fanatical Muslims is involved in a losing battle, and that final defeat is inescapable. We would contend that what is inescapable is that few, if any, of those specialists who adhere to this position have intellectual backgrounds which are conducive to an understanding of Islam and Islamic society. Without this it is easy to see why they dismiss Sufism in the Soviet Union as a folkloric survival rather than considering it as something fundamental to almost the entire Muslim world. Some even go so far as to pretend that Sufism is non-existent and that Soviet sources provide no evidence of the activity of Sufi brotherhoods.

This is a puzzling position. During the last twenty-five years Soviet sources have provided, and continue to provide, abundant evidence of the activities of Sufi brotherhoods. Admittedly, these sources are not always easily obtainable, and, as in virtually every other attempt to understand Soviet reality using Soviet sources, great familiarity with the subject, its lexicon (both Soviet and non-Soviet variants), and the analytical spectra within which the sources become meaningful is necessary for the student. And like every other body of evidence, some are more useful and complete than others. These are indeed handicaps, but they are the same handicaps that are encountered by those researching less esoteric — and often less politically sensitive — subjects with Soviet sources, such as the state of agriculture. But to say that the material does not exist is simply wrong.

With the exception of the north-eastern Caucasus (Daghestan and Chechen-Ingush republics), where nearly all the sources are in Russian, a knowledge of literary Azeri Turkic and of the Central Asian languages (Uzbek, Kazakh, Kirghiz, Turkmen, Tajik, Uyghur and Karakalpak) is essential because of the number of books, articles and pamphlets that have been published in local languages only.

No western monographs, to our knowledge, are devoted to information on the history and the specific character of Sufi organisation and practice in pre-revolutionary Russia and the Soviet Union. However, several eminent Western specialists are currently working on the history of fundamentalist trends and on the Sufi

brotherhoods generally among whom the following stand out: Anne-Marie Schimmel in Germany, Joseph Fletcher (at the time of his death), Nikki Keddie and Hamed Algar in the United States, Spencer Trimingham in Britain and Alexandre Popovic, Chantal Lemercier-Quelquejay and Olivier Roy in France. The general works by these authors are indispensible for a better understanding of Sufism in the Soviet Union. It is also essential to have some insight into the recent and contemporary history of the Muslim territories worldwide; the same Sufi brotherhoods (particularly the militant Naqshbandiya) have played a similar or comparable role in the defence of Islam against foreign domination in, for example, Sinkiang, Indonesia, the Punjab, Algeria, the Sudan, West Africa and, today, Afghanistan. Nor is it possible to ignore history. For example, one must consider the intellectual influence exercised by mystical Sufism on the greatest and most popular poets and writers who were active in what are now Soviet territories and whom even the Soviet regime views as popular national heroes — among others Abdurrahman Djami, Ali-Shir Navai, Mahtum Quli, Molla Nepes and Zelili. These and many others were members of the Naqshbandiya or of another brotherhood.

Sufism is not a sect, not is it a heretical or schismatic movement; it is an integral part of orthodox Islam. Western analysts in particular are prone to lose sight of this fact, frequently alluding to Sufism instead as something foreign to Islam, indeed something aberrant. This is how, for reasons of their own, Soviet scholars treat it. Attacks against fundamentalist Islam are generally violent and focused directly on the Sufi orders as a whole or against their individual leaders (*sheikhs*, *ishans*) and adepts (*murids*), but these are seldom denounced as ''Sufi''. Other synonymous terms are used which have remained unchanged for the last twenty-five years. They should be known by those Western specialists who want to find their way through this obscure area where Soviet authorities are waging their main struggle against Islam: such terms as *sheikh*, *pir*, *ishan*, ''sectarian underground'', ''self-appointed'' or ''non-registered'' clerics and mullahs, ''uncontrolled religious elements'', '' religious activists'', ''*dukhovniki*'' (Russian translation of the Persian *ruhani*), ''Old Islamists'' (*Staro Islamisty*), an artificial expression on the model of the Russian ''Old Believers'' (*Staroobriadtsy*), and more simply ''obscurantists'', ''reactionary clerics'', ''charlatans'', ''vagabonds'', ''crooks'', ''frauds'' and ''parasites'' (*tuneiadtsy*). ''*Narod osuzhdaet tuneiadtzev*'' (''People condemn the parasites'') is a typical title of an article in *Groznenskii rabotchii* of

3 September 1963 announcing the trial of a group of adepts of the Batal Haji *tariqat*. Sufi *tariqa* are often also alled "*murid* groups" and "outside the mosque groups" (*vnemechetnye gruppy*). The terms "fanatic" and "fanatical" are as a rule applied to all these elements, in contrast to the members of the "domesticated" official Muslim establishment, who are never attacked but qualify instead as "democratic", "honest", "open-minded" and "progressive". In some areas, e.g. in Turkmen SSR and in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, where all but a few mosques have been closed — the term "clerics" (*dukhovenstvo*) usually applies not to the official *mullahs* but to the adepts of Sufi orders. In the North Caucasus the expression "spiritual authorities" (*dukhovnye avtoritety*) is often used. Soviet sources tend also to confuse the Sufis with *shamans*.

Finally, in order to appreciate correctly the place of the Sufi brotherhoods in the Soviet Union, it is necessary to have a basic knowledge of the anthropology of the Muslim peoples. During the Soviet period the symbiosis between the Sufi *tariqa* and the clan or tribal communities, which was already perceptible in the nineteenth century, has become an accomplished fact. Today Sufi organisations are especially strong in those areas where the indigenous society has preserved its traditional clan or tribal structure, particularly in northern Daghestan, in the Chechen-Ingush Republic, in Turkmenistan, in the southern part of Kazakhstan, in Kirghizia and in the western area of Tajikistan. The control established by the Sufi brotherhoods over the so-called "holy places" and their monopoly of the cult of the saints (who are often simultaneously Sufi sheikhs and clan ancestors), which is one of the most distinctive and lively aspects of popular Islam in the Soviet Union; the control over the complex mechanism of the Muslim cemeteries which are generally situated around the "holy places"; the problem of the hereditary succession to leadership in Sufi *tariqa*; the spiritual and even the political influence exercised in some areas, in Turkmenistan for instance, by the so-called "holy tribes" which produce the leaders of the Sufi orders — the significance of all these cannot be appreciated without a sound training in anthropology.

Nearly all the Soviet sources pertaining to Islam and atheism in the Muslim republics contain information on Sufism, and it is impossible to enumerate them all. Therefore we must limit our survey to the most interesting of those which have been published during the last twenty-five years. It was in the early 1960s that Soviet authorities began to

appreciate the extent of the religious revival of Islam as well as the role played in this revival by various fundamentalist influences. From that time information relative to Sufi activity has varied little. The same holy places closed or transformed into anti-religious museums or *dom otdykha* (rest houses) in 1963 are still "active" twenty years later; the same arguments are used against the same "fanatics" in the same areas. Sufi *tariqa* have existed since the early Middle Ages and they have survived centuries of disasters and major tragedies — the Mongols of Chingis, Tsarist conquest, Stalin's terror. They are well prepared to resist any new Soviet pressure.

Information on Sufism and fundamentalist Islam may be found in two main categories of source, the periodical press and various non-periodical publications.

Periodical press

The main sources of information on the daily life of the Muslim territories are the autonomous republican, the regional (*oblast'*) or district (*rayon*) newspapers, and these are not available outside the Soviet Union. However, specific information from these periodicals concerning the activities of "fanatics", including their trials, are regularly reproduced a few years later in the books and pamphlets published by the specialists in anti-religious *agitprop*.

The republican daily press reproduces in local languages and in Russian all important official documents like reports by local Communist Party leaders: some include direct attacks against Sufi adepts — for instance the long article by the Chairman of the Azerbaijan KGB, Major-General Ziya Yusuf-Zade, on the "Security of the State and of the People" published in the *Bakinskii Rabochii* on 19 December 1980 and in which the General denounced "the harmful and anti-social actions of the sectarian underground" and the "reactionary Muslim clergy". Republican newspapers also regularly publish what may be called "orientation articles" showing the beginning of a new turn of an ideological campaign. Such, for instance, are the important article by B. Iablokov and E.M. Kurylev, "Sharlatany" in *Turkmenskaya Iskra* of 3 August 1982, denouncing the activities of the Sufi sheikhs in Turkmenistan, or the major support by Gapurov, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, in *Turkmenskaia Iskra* of 25 January 1983 marking the launching of a new campaign against "parallel Islam" in Turkmenistan.

We may also mention the two special atheist periodicals in Moscow, the monthly *Nauki i religiia* and the collection *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, both of which regularly publish material on "parallel Islam".

Non-periodical publications

These may be divided roughly into two main categories:
(1) Anti-religious propaganda material by professional *agitprop* experts for the benefit of local propagandists. Despite their crudeness and their low intellectual level, these publications are of interest because of the numerous data included from the regional (*oblast'*) or district (*rayon*) press.
(2) Scholarly works containing the findings of the sociological surveys conducted in Central Asia and in the North Caucasus in the early and middle 1970s which are now being published. The works of Bazarbaev, Pivovarov, Izimbetov, Makatov, Demidov and a few others belong to this category and are our principal and most reliable sources on the fundamentalist trends in Soviet Islam.

As a rule, Soviet non-periodical local publications on Islam are published in a limited number, usually between 500 and 2,000 copies. They are therefore intended for domestic consumption rather than foreign observers, and are not easy to find abroad. However, to read them is always rewarding.

To the official Soviet sources we must add the valuable information provided by personal contacts. Soviet Muslim republics can no longer be protected by an Iron Curtain as they were in Stalin's time. Significant numbers of foreign Muslims (not all of them Marxists), including Muslim intellectuals, exchange scholars, and members of various delegations now frequently visit the Muslim regions of the Soviet Union. Their observations are usually unique.

Soviet sources, because of their abundance, can provide a more or less coherent picture of Islam in the Soviet Union. But it is obvious that this picture is incomplete, biased and falsified. Sufism indeed has a double aspect. It is a personal, mystical experience under the guidance of a master, but it is also a collective, highly hierarchical human community ruled by compulsory regulations and bound by a common ideology and a strict discipline. In this second aspect a *tariqat* can be compared to a political organisation; it is the only aspect that Soviet anti-religious experts can grasp. The first and the essential aspect of Sufism — the mystical journey (*suluk*) along the path (*tariqa*) leading to

God — is of course completely beyond their comprehension. This is true even of the best experts, such as Saidbaev in Uzbekistan or Demidov in Turkmenia. It is like asking a tone-deaf person to comment on a Mozart opera. An *agitpropshchik* (propagandist) limits his analysis to the purely external, exoteric (*zahir*) aspect of Islam. The monotonous and boring anti-religious literature may provide interesting data on the geographical distribution of the Sufi *tariqa*, on the location of the "holy places" and their main centres of activity, on the numbers of adepts, on their organisations or on the symbiosis between the tribal system and the Sufi orders, even on their educational activities and political attitudes, but one should expect hardly anything on their spiritual life.

Soviet sources on Sufi *tariqat* are numerous and diversified. More works on Sufism are published today than twenty years ago. Almost all of them pretend that Sufism belongs to the past, and that it is a mere "feudal and clerical survival" in the process of being cast into the dustbin of history. One may reasonably and intelligently doubt this statement; it is quite possible that Sufism in the Soviet Union represents, on the contrary, the dynamic spearhead of a broader revivalist movement in Islam generally.

It would certainly be childish to imagine that Sufi brotherhoods in the Soviet Union are threatening the Soviet empire, or to expect the *tariqa* to assume in the near future the leadership of an armed rebellion against Soviet rule. It is true that in the past Sufi brotherhoods, above all the militant Naqshbandiya, have actively participated in, or led, several major revolts against the Russians which are described in this study. But the armed struggle against the "infidel" is only a "Lesser Ghazawat". The struggle against evil in all its forms for the maintenance of the purity of the faith is the "Greater Ghazawat". In Central Asia Sufi orders have played the role of protectors and saviours of Islam since the first major invasion of the infidels, the Buddhist Qara Khitais in the twelfth century, followed by many others: the Chingiside Mongols in the twelfth century, the Buddhist Jungars and Kalmyks in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and finally the last of the "barbarians", the Russians in both their Christian and their Marxist guise. For Muslim believers, the rule of the Soviets is not basically different from that of their Buddhist, pagan or Christian predecessors. Today Sufi brotherhoods are accomplishing their humble and essential task by less spectacular means than armed uprising, but in a way without which Islam would long ago have lost its hold over the

masses or its ability to engage the élites of these societies. Obviously, in the short run, Sufism is no more threatening to the stability of the Soviet empire than the Old Believers, the Baptists, or the Jehovah's Witnesses, but in the long run, given the confusion and coincidence of nationalism and religion in the Soviet Muslim world, it would be unacademic to dismiss the potential importance of the growing strength of this fundamentalist trend in Soviet Islam. Similar errors have been committed recently by Western analysts viewing other areas of the Muslim world: for example, in Iran before the downfall of the Shah and the rise of Khomeini, and more poignantly in Afghanistan in January 1980, when far too many otherwise intelligent observers predicted a quick and decisive victory for the invading Soviet army over the poorly armed, "primitive" Afghan Muslims. These observers have now had the luxury of several years to consider the reasons for their poor judgment. They, and indeed all of us, have a similar opportunity to begin to understand the Sufi phenomena in the Soviet Union before events leave us groping for explanations.

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The North Caucasus

Abazatov, M.A., *Popytki modernizatsii Islama* (''Attempts to modernise Islam''), Groznyi, 1966, 40 pp.

Abdullaev, M.A., *Nekotorye voprosy teologii Islama* (''Some questions concerning the theology of Islam''), Makhach-Qala, 1973, 152 pp, 1,000 copies. Religious *samizdat*, letters-messages, theological treatises, songs, moral treatises of a Sufi character (mainly Naqshbandi) ''circulating today'' in Daghestan and in Chechnia, in Arabic and Darghin.

——, ''Za glubokoe kriticheskoe izuchenie ideologii Islama'' (''For a deep critical survey of Islam's ideology''), *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia*, Groznyi, 1972, 1,000 copies. Especially the following pages: p. 29, conservative trends among the ''non-official clerics'' (Sufis); p. 30, conflict between conservatives and modernists, ''the former are stronger and often succeed in orientating public opinion''; p. 32, percentage of firm believers (fanatics).

—— and Gadzhiev, S.M., *Pogovorim o musul'manskoi religii* (''Let us talk about the Muslim religion''), Makhach-Qala, 1961, 131 pp. A violent attack against conservative Islam, Sufi brotherhoods, holy places etc. in Daghestan.

—— and Vagabov, M.V., *Aktual'nye problemy kritiki i preodoleniia Islama* (''Current problems of critics and the overcoming of Islam''), Makhach-Qala, 1975, 224 pp., number of copies unknown. Numerous data on cult of Sufi saints, pilgrimages to holy places and their role in the revival of Islam, *zikr* religious propaganda, new Sufi orders, and the activity of ''non-registered clerics'' in Daghestan.

Ahmedov, D., *Pogovorim ob adatakh* (''Let us talk about the *adat*''), Makhach-Qala, 1963, 17 pp. Violent attack on traditional customs. Also published in Avar, Darghin, Kumyk, Lak and Lezghin.

Aidaev, Iv.A. and Pivovarov, V.G., ''Problemy konkretnykh issledovanii Religii'' (''Problems concerning a concrete survey of religions''), *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia*, op. cit., pp. 3-22. Activity of Sufi orders in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR: p. 11, pilgrimage to the holy shrines ''which are the most effective places for the propaganda of non-official Islam''; pp. 12-13, absence of official clerics in the Chechen-Ingush Republic replaced by *murid* adepts; p. 17, why believers join a Sufi *tariqa*.

Alaverdiev, A.A., ''Kakie deistviia dukhovenstva iavliaiutsia proti-vozakonnymi?'' (''What actions of the clergy are unlawful?''), *Religiia vchera i segodnia*, Makhach-Qala, 1969, pp. 33-48; 3,000 copies. Examples of trials of illegal religious groups in Daghestan.

Angutaev, G. (Secretary of the Botlikh *raikom* in Daghestan), ''Aktivno, nastupatel'no'' (''Actively, aggressively''), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, 1975, pp. 18-24. Illegal foundation of new mosques, ''criminal activity and charlatanism of religious fanatics'', adepts of Kunta Haji *tariqa* in Daghestan.

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Avksent'ev, A.V., *Islam na Severnom Kavkaze* (''Islam in the North Caucasus''), Stavropol, 1973, 166 pp., 2,000 copies. Covers all the North Caucasus with the exception of Daghestan but focusing on the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. Serious and well documented. Chapter III, pp. 76-102: ''Muslim sects and North Caucasian muridism.'' Based on local press, presents detailed survey on Sufi orders in Chechen-Ingush republic, especially in the post-war period.

Bashirov, L.A., *Puti predodoleniia religioznykh i patriarkhal'nykh perezhitkov* (''Ways to overcome religious and patriarchal survivals''), Groznyi, 1975, 59 pp., 1,000 copies.

Bokov, Kh.Kh., *Ateisty v nastuplenii* (''Atheists on the offensive''), Groznyi, 1968, 168 pp., 2,000 copies. Important and original work quoting large extracts from local press of the 1950s and 1960s in Russian, Chechen and Ingush, especially concerning the ''obnoxious activity'' of Sufi brotherhoods and quoting details of various measures taken by republican authorities against Sufi adepts. Mentions new developments in the structure of Sufi *tariqa*: federations of brotherhoods, women etc., especially pp. 42-5, 106-12.

Datunashvili, I.I., ''Materialy k kharakteristiki sovremennogo sostoianiia religioznosti v Belokanskom, Zakatal'skom i Kakhskom raionakh (Azerbaijanskaia SSR)'' (''Materials for the characterisation of the current prevalence of religion in the districts of Belokany, Zakataly and Kakh of the Azerbaijan SSR''), *Konkretnye issledovaniia sovremennykh religioznykh verovanii*, Moscow, 1967, pp. 187-94, 191-2, 10,000 copies. Activity of the Sufi sheikhs, *zikr* pilgrimage to the holy places.

Fatullaoglu, A., ''Prostye sekrety sviatykh grobnitz'' (''Simple secrets of holy graves''), *Nauka i religiia*, Moscow, 1980, pp. 31-3. Holy places and pilgrimage in Azerbaijan.

Filimonov, N.G., ''Sotsiologicheskie issledovanie protsessa preodoleniia religii v sel'skoi mestnosti — Itogi, problemy, perspektivy'' (''Sociological surveys of the process of overcoming religion in a rural area: results, problems, prospects'') *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, Moscow, XVI, 1974, pp. 71-89. Based on several surveys in Daghestan, Middle Volga, Orel oblast' etc.: pp. 80-1, role of the Sufi brotherhoods in the preservation of religious and nationalistic survivals.

Gabisov, B.G., *Puti proshlogo* (''The ways of the past''), Groznyi, 1965. Sufi orders and various traditional customs.

Gabunia, G.R., ''K voprosu o formirovanii teoriticheskikh osnov Sufizma'' (''On the problem of the formation of the theoretical basis of Sufism''). *Nauchnye trudy Kafedry Filosofii Dagestanskogo Universiteta*, Makhach-Qala, 1969.

Gadaev, V.Iu., ''O kharaktere religioznosti sel'skoi molodezhi'' (''About the character of religion among rural youth''), *Kharakter religioznosti i problemy ateisticheskogo vospitaniia* (Character of religion and problems of atheist education), Groznyi, 1979, pp. 40-57, 1,000 copies.

Gadzhiev, S.M., *Puti preodoleniia perezhitkov Islama-po materialam Severnogo Kavkaza i Dagestana* (''How to overcome the survivals of Islam, based on the data collected in the North Caucasus and Daghestan''), Makhach-Qala, 1963, 248 pp., 5,000 copies. Pp. 27-38, Sufi orders during the Revolution and the Civil War; pp. 86-7, reactivisation of fanatical elements after World War II; p. 215, new holy places; pp. 219-25, recommendations on how to fight against the pilgrimages to the holy places.

——, *Sushchnost' ideologii Islama i puti ee preodoleniia* (''The essence of the ideology of Islam and how to overcome it''), Makhach-Qala, 1959, 135 pp., 2,000 copies. Chapter 3, historical survey of the counter-revolutionary role of the Sufi brotherhoods in 1920-1 in the North Caucasus.

——, *Nastupat' a ne oboroniatsia* (''To be on the offensive and not on the defensive''), Groznyi, 1964, 35 pp. Against Sufi *tariqa*.

Hasanov, Sh., *Kändä ateist ish* (''Atheist work today''), Baku, 1973, 62 pp., 1,000 copies; in Azeri Turkic. Pp. 10-42, religious survivals, holy places, Sufi brotherhoods, cult of the saints.

Iampol'skii, Z.I., ''O pervobytnykh korniakh kul'ta sviatykh v Islame'' (''Primitive roots of the cult of the saints in Islam''), *Materialy po istorii Azerbaidzhana — Trudy Muzeia istorii Azerbaydzhana*, vol. 1, Baku 1962.

——, ''Piry Azerbaydzhana'' (''The holy places of Azerbaijan''), *Voprosy istorii religii i ateizma*, Moscow, 1960, VIII, pp. 219-40. Pilgrimage to the holy places, many figures, numbers of pilgrims.

Iandarov, A.D., *Sufizm i ideologiia natsional'no — osvoboditel'nogo dvizheniia* (''Sufism and the ideology of national liberation movement''), Alma-Ata, 1975, 176 pp., 1,600 copies. Curious but totally false attempt by a Chechen scholar living in Kazakhstan to dissociate Shamil's ''muridism'', considered as a positive phenomenon, from ''clerical'' and obnoxious Sufi mysticism. The propaganda character of the work is obvious.

Ikhilov, D., ''Perezhitki drevnikh verovanii i puti ikh preodoleniia'' (''Survivals of antique beliefs and ways to overcome them''), *Sovetskii Dagestan* 1981, IV, pp. 23-28. Holy places in Daghestan.

Ismailov, Sh. (Secretary of Daghestan *obkom*), ''Vyshe uroven' ateisticheskoi raboty'' (''Raise the level of anti-religious work''), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, Makhach-Qala, 1981, pp. 1-8. Illegal activity of *murid* groups, Naqshbandi and Qadiri *zikr*; pp. 2-5, clandestine religious schools; p. 3, underground mosques; p. 5, pilgrimage to the holy places.

Karataeva, M.N., ''Reaktsionnaia ideologiia musul'manskogo dukhovenstva Checheno-Ingushetii i bor'ba s nei v 1920-1931 gg'' (''The reactionary ideology of the Muslim clergy of Checheno-Ingushetiia and the struggle against it in 1920-1931''), *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia*, op. cit., pp. 83-113. Detailed survey of the fight against Muslim conservatives, mainly Sufi adepts in the 1920s. The propaganda aspect is obvious.

——, *Kharacter religioznosti i problemy ateisticheskogo vospitaniia* (''The character of religion and problems of atheistic education''), Groznyi, 1979,

178 pp., 1,000 copies. Survivals of conservative Islam including Sufi orders in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR.

Kerimov, G., ''Sufizm i gospodstvuiushchie klassy'' (''Sufism and the ruling classes''), *Izvestia Akademii Nauk Azerbaidzhanskoi SSR-Seria Istorii, Filosofii i Prava*, Baku, 1966, pp. 97-102.

Khashaev, Kh.M., *Perezhitki Shariyata i vrednykh adatov i bor'ba s nimi* (''Survivals of the Shari'yat and of the obnoxious *adats* and how to fight them''), Makhach-Qala, 1963 (2nd edn), 31 pp., 1,000 copies. P. 15, pilgrimage to the tombs of Naqshbandi sheikhs in Daghestan.

Klimovich, L.I., *Obriady, prazdniki i kul't sviatykh v Islame* (''Rites, festivals and the cult of saints in Islam''), Groznyi, 1958, 63 pp. Description of the holy places and cult of Sufi saints in the Chechen-Ingush Republic.

Kuroedov, V.A., *Religiia i tserkov' v Sovetskom gosudarstve* (''Religion and Church in the Soviet state''), Moscow, 1981, 264 pp., 100,000 copies. The author, who is the Chairman of the Committee for Religious Affairs of the Central Committee of the CPSU, notes among ''various anti-Soviet phenomena'' the activity of numerous self-appointed mullahs who ''create illegal societies'' (brotherhoods) and restore holy places; quotes several such places in Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and Daghestan formerly closed but still working, pp. 199-200.

Magomedov, M., ''O dvukh tendentsiiakh musul'manskogo dukhovenstva'' (''Concerning two trends among Muslim clerics''), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, Makhach-Qala, 1967, pp. 23-6. The trends are the modernist and the conservative, the last represented mainly by Sufi adepts.

——, *Opyt ateisticheskoi propagandy* (''Experience of anti-religious propaganda''), Makhach-Qala, 1964, 200 pp., 2,000 copies. Interesting survey based on the local press, *Dagestanskaia Pravda* and archival materials: pp. 62-5, pilgrimage to the Holy Places; pp. 55-67, activity of the Naqshbandis; pp. 39, 54-8, 63, 65, activity of the Qadiris; pp. 53, 62-5, anti-*tariqa* publications and broadcasts.

Mahmudov, P., ''O sushchnosti kul'ta 'sviatykh' v Azerbaidzhane'' (''The meaning of the cult of the saints of Azerbaijan''), *Materialy nauchnoi konferentsii modernizatsia Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma,* Moscow, 1968, 209 pp., 300 copies. Pp. 62-6, cult of ''living saints'' including heads of *tariqa*; p. 64, holy places, including some new ones; p. 66, pilgrimage of 10,000 to 15,000 pilgrims to especially venerated *mazars*.

Makatov, I.A., *Islam, veruiushchii, sovremennost' — Opyt konkretno-sotsial'nogo izucheniia Musul'manstvo* (''Islam, believers and the present time — applied sociological research of the Muslim religion''), Makhach-Qala, 1974, 104 pp., 2,000 copies. Based on a sociological survey conducted among 1,584 Daghestanis of whom 1,077 were believers and 175 ''religious authorities'' (Sufi adepts). Interesting figures concerning the behaviour of ''religious fanatics''.

——, *Kul't sviatykh, perezhitok proshlogo* (''Cult of the saints, a survival of the past''), Makhach-Qala, 1962, 34 pp., 2,000 copies. Focused on the

Holy Places in Daghestan: nefarious activity of the Sufi sheikhs, creation of new holy places, special references to the expansion of the Qadiri order in Daghestan after Second World War.

——, "Kul't sviatykh v Islame" ("Cult of the saints in Islam"), *Voprosy nauchnogo ateisma*, Moscow, III, 1967, pp. 164-85. Detailed description of the holy places in Daghestan and Chechen-Ingush republic, pilgrimage, Sufi *zikr* and anti-Soviet propaganda by Sufi adepts, based on the local press of the 1960s.

——, "Oslablenie religioznosti sovremennogo Musul'manstva — na materialakh sotsiologicheskikh issledovanii v respublikakh Dagestana i Checheno-Ingushetii" ("The weakening of religion of the present-day Muslim — based on the figures of sociological surveys in Daghestan and Checheno-Ingushetia"), *Materialy Nauchnoi Konferentsii Modernizatsia Islama i aktual'nye voprosy teorii nauchnogo ateizma*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 95-102, 300 copies. Data collected by the Sociological Laboratory of the Pedagogical Institute of Daghestan in the 1960s. 48.2% of the believers are classified as "firm believers" or "fanatics" who are active propagandists of Islam.

——, *Religioznye gruppy Amaiia i Kunta Khadzhi* ("The religious groups Amaia and Kunta Haji"), Makhach-Qala, 1965, 34 pp., 3,000 copies. Activity of the Qadiri (Kunta Haji) and of a Naqshbandi group (Amaia) in Daghestan and the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, based on the local press and archival materials.

Mamadli, G.M., *Tufeili Ojaglary* ("Nest of the parasites"), Baku, 1963, 67 pp., 10,000 copies (Azeri Turkic). Vicious attack against the sixteen main "working" Holy Places in Azerbayjan.

Mamleev, Kh.B., *Nekotorye osobennosti Islama v Checheno-Ingushetii* ("Some peculiarities of Islam in Checheno-Ingushetia"), Groznyi, 1970, Collection *V pomoshch ateistu* 32 pp., 1,000 copies. Description of Chechen Sufi orders, especially Qadiriya; interesting data concerning one of its most "fanatical" sub-orders, the Vis Haji *tariqa*.

——, *Reaktsionnaia sushchnost' muridizma* ("The reactionary essence of Muridism"), Groznyi 1966, Collection *V pomoshch ateistu*, 46 pp., 1,000 copies. Denounces the politically dangerous activity of Qadiri orders, especially its most radical branch, the Batal Haji *tariqa*, in the post-war period.

Mankiev, A.A., "Iz istorii klerikal'no-Musul'manskoi mysli v Checheno-Ingushetii" ("History of clerical Muslim thought in Checheno-Ingushetia"), *Sotsiologiia, ateizm, religiia*, op. cit., pp. 36-64. Historical survey of Sufi orders, especially the Naqshbandiya during and after the Revolution.

Medzhidov, D.D., "Problemy vzaimosviazi religii i natsionalizma" ("Problems of relations between religion and nationalism"), *Kharakter religioznosti i problemy ateisticheskogo vospitaniia*, Groznyi, 1979, pp. 84-102. Denounces dangerous nationalistic propaganda of so-called "religious authorities" who, in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, are

represented by sheikhs of Sufi orders. In 1979, there were no official Muslim clerics in the republic.

Murtazalieva, S., "Bor'ba idei i svoboda sovesti" ("The ideological struggle and free will"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, Makhach-Qala, 1981, pp. 49-55. Illegal, criminal activity of Sufi brotherhoods, especially of the Qadiris in northern Daghestan, anti-Soviet propaganda, illegal religious schools, trials of Sufi leaders, illegal religious literature, public *zikr* in 1979 held by Vis Haji adepts.

——, "Uchityvaia Mestnye Osobennosti" ("Taking local conditions into account"), *Sovetskii Dagestan*, Makhach-Qala, 1982, pp. 46-50. Continuing pilgrimage to the holy places, obnoxious activity of "self-appointed sheikhs", recruitment of adepts, open and clandestine, participation of young people in religious rites, anti-social behaviour of non-registered clerics.

Mustafinov, M.M., *Antinauchnost' idei o tozhdestve natsional'nogo i religioznogo* ("The anti-scientific idea of national and religious identity"), Groznyi, 1975, 32 pp.; no. of copies unknown. Endogamy practices by the adepts of the Vis Haji *tariqa*.

——, *Zikrism i ego sotsial'naia sushchnost'* ("Zikrism and its social essence"), Groznyi, 1971, 44 pp., no. of copies unknown. Collection *V pomoshch ateistu*. Detailed survey of the history and current activities of the Qadiriya (Kunta Haji) order and its various branches in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR based on the local press. Description of *zikr*, examples of Sufi poems, estimate of the number of adepts.

Pivovarov, V.G., *Na etapakh sotsiologicheskogo issledovaniia* ("Stages of the sociological survey"), Groznyi, 1974, 210 pp., 800 copies. Serious and detailed sociological survey of the level of religion in Penza *oblast'* and in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, by the leading Soviet expert in religious sociology. Interesting data on the percentage of "fanatical believers".

——, "Sotsiologicheskie issledovaniia problem byta natsional'nykh traditsii i verovanii v Checheno-Ingushskoi ASSR" ("Sociological survey of customs, national traditions and beliefs in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR"), *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, Moscow, vol.17, 1975, pp. 311-20. Based on data provided by investigation conducted in 1970-2 in the Chechen-Ingush Republic by the Institute of Scientific Atheism of the Academy of Social Sciences of the CPSU Central Committee and Laboratory of Social Research of the *obkom* of the Chechen-Ingush ASSR on the general theme "Customs, culture, national traditions and religious beliefs in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR. Very interesting data on activity of Sufi orders, cf. p. 316, "More than half of the Muslim believers of the Chechen-Ingush republics are members of a *murid* brotherhood."

Salamov, A.A., "Pravda o sviatykh mestakh v Checheno-Ingushetii" ("The truth about the holy places in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR"), Groznyi, *Trudy Checheno-Ingushskogo Nauchnogo-issledovatel'skogo Instituta pri Sovete Ministrov Checheno-Ingusheskoi ASSR*, vol.9, 1964, pp. 155-69.

Detailed description of the holy places of pilgrimage controlled by the two Sufi orders active in Chechen country — the Naqshbandiya and Qadiriya brotherhoods — by the leading Chechen expert on Islam.

Sarymsakov, T.S., *Vremia i Islam* (''Our time and Islam''), Groznyi, 1968, 123 pp. Collection *V pomoshch ateistu*.

Sattarov, M.M., *Islam dini galyglary* (''Survivals of Islam''), Baku, 1967, 181 pp., 2,700 copies; in Azeri Turkic. The best work on Islam in Azerbaijan. Detailed description of the holy places, the cult of the saints and the activity of parallel Islam.

——, *Socializm gurujulughu dövründa Azerbaidzhan halgynda ateizm dunjakoruyurunun formalashmasy* (''Formation of the atheistic world-view of the Azerbaijani nation during the period of Socialist edification''), Baku, Academy of Sciences, 1964, in Azeri Turkic. Sufi *tariqa* located in the district of Kazakh, Genge, Kuba, Shemakha, Zakataly and Nukha.

—— and Kacharli, F.G., ''Razvitie ateizma v Sovetskom Azerbaidzhane'' (''The development of atheism in Soviet Azerbaijan''), *Voprosy nauchnogo ateizma*, Moscow, 1968, pp. 46-59. Struggle against self-appointed mullahs and dervishes who push the believers into performing unlawful religious rites.

Smirnov, N.A., ''Kharakternye cherty Kavkazskogo Muridizma'' (''Characteristic aspects of Caucasian muridism''), *Voprosy istorii religii i ateizm*, Moscow, Academy of Science, 1959, pp. 175-85, 3,500 copies. Attack on Shamil's muridism by leading Soviet expert on Caucasian Sufism with obvious political implications. The last sentence reveals the tendency of the article: ''Muridism was an attempt, reactionary in form and essence, to isolate North Caucasian mountaineers from general historical development.''

Tutaev, A.M., *Protiv sektanskogo bezzakonia* (''Against sectarian unlawfulness''), Groznyi, 1975, 22 pp., 15,000 copies (2nd edn). Criminal activity of the Batal Haji *tariqa*, a branch of the Qadiriya.

——, *Reaktsionnaia sekta Batal Hadzhi* (''The reactionary sect of the Batal Haji''), Groznyi, 1968, 28 pp., 1,000 copies. Attack on the Batal Haji *tariqa*.

Umarov, S., ''Muridizm s blizskogo rasstoianiia'' (''A close-up view of Muridism''), *Nauka i religiia*, Moscow, 1979, pp. 30-2. Description of a Naqshbandi *zikr* in Chechnia with interesting commentaries explaining the present vitality of Sufi orders and their role in the preservation of nationalism in the North Caucasus.

Vagabov, M.V., *Islam i sem'ia* (''Islam and the family''), Moscow, 1980, 174 pp., 10,000 copies. Pp. 142-4, endogamy and other anti-Soviet marital customs practised by the adepts of some Chechen Sufi brotherhoods, especially the Vis Haji and the Batal Haji *tariqa*. Based on archival materials of the Supreme Court of the Checheno-Ingush ASSR.

——, ''Perezhitki Islama v Dagestane i spetsifika ikh proiavleniia'' (''Survivals of Islam in Daghestan and the specificity of their manifestation''), *Materialy nauchnoi sessii modernizatsii Islama i aktual'tnye voprosy teorii*

nauchnogo ateizma, Moscow, 1968, pp. 124-30, 300 copies. Three categories of survivals. In the third category are classified the survivals observed among "fanatics" including initiation into *murid* groups.

Central Asia

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influence of the active believers on the persistence of religious survivals''), *Religioznye perezhitki i puti ikh preodoleniia v Turkmenistane*, op. cit., Ashkhabad, 1977, pp. 67-81, 2,600 copies. Interesting little article focused entirely on the activities of Sufis in Turkmenistan, based on a survey conducted in 1965; holy places, recruitment of adepts (p.74), psychological influence of the Sufis on the population.

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——, *Paidoish va mohiyat-i ichtimoiy-i darveshi* (''Origin and social essence of dervishism''), Dushambe, 1975, 69 pp., 3,000 copies. The book is entirely focused on Sufi brotherhoods in Tajikistan, with many references to Uzbekistan; pp. 51-68, description of the holy places in Tajikistan.

Saidbaev, T.S., *Islam i obshchestvo* (''Islam and society''), Moscow, 1978, 254 pp., 11,000 copies. The recent standard Soviet work on Islam in the Soviet Union, objective, well-documented, using interesting data of numerous sociological surveys. Numerous references to conservative trends in Islam, Holy Places, pilgrimages.

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Sharipov, E. and Bozorov, E., *Mukaddas zhoilar tughrisida hakikat* (''The truth about the holy places''), Tashkent 1977, 32 pp., 10,270 copies, in Uzbek. Holy places and parallel Islamic clerics' activities in Uzbekistan, especially in the Namangan region.

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APPENDIX C

GLOSSARY

Abrek. In Chechnia and Daghestan, "bandit of hofour", fighting his own guerrilla war against the infidels.

Adat. Customary law.

Anjoman. Society.

Agitprop. Department of Agitation and Propaganda.

Aqsaqal, Aqsaqalism. "White beard" (Turkish), elder, exaggerated respect for elders.

Ashura. Shi'a festival, commemorating the death of Imam Husain.

Ata. "Father".

Aul. Mountain village.

Awlad (Russian *Ovliad*). "Holy Tribe" in Turkmenistan, supposedly descending from one of the first four califs.

Barabanshchiki. "Drummers", name given by the Russians to the adepts of Chim Mirza brotherhood.

Beloshaposhniki. "White caps", name given by the Russians to the adepts of the Vis Haji brotherhood.

CP. Communist Party.

CC. Central Committee.

Dar ul-Islam. "The Abode of Islam", Muslim lands as opposed to *Dar ul-Harb* "the abode of War", dominated by the infidels.

Dervish. "Poor man", synonym of Sufi adept (Persian).

Diamat. Dialectical Materialism.

Fakir. "Poor man", synonym of Sufi adept (Arabic).

Fetwa. Legal opinion in written form, given by a *mufti* in answer to a question.

Ghazawat. "Holy war", synonym of *Jihad*.

Gonambashy. Guardian of Muslim cemetery in Turkmenistan.

Gorkom. City committee of the Communist Party.

Gorsovet. City council.

Gumbez. Mausoleum of a saint; see *Mazar, Pir*.

Hadith. Saying of the Prophet.

Haj. Pilgrimage to Mecca. *Haji*. Man who has accomplished a pilgrimage.

Hezb. "Party".

Ijtihad.. Interpretation of the Quran and of the Shari'yat.

Imam. Leader of the collective prayer, by extension leader of the community; among the Shi'a, supreme head of the Shi'a community.

Imam-Khatib. Head of the mosque.

Imam-Zade. "Son of an Imam"; in Azerbaijan, "holy place", synonym of *mazar, pir, gumbez*.

Ishan (in Persian, "they"). Master of a Sufi brotherhood, see *Murshid, Pir, Sheik, Ustad*.

Ishanism. Used by the Russians in the nineteenth century as synonym of Sufism.
Islah. Reform.
Ispolkom. Executive Committee.
Jadid. Modernist.
Jadidism. Modernism, reformist movement of the late nineteenth century.
Jema'at. "Assembly".
Jihad. Holy war, synonym of *Ghazawat*.
Jum'a. "Assembly".
Kafir (plural *Kufar*). Infidel.
Kalender. Wandering, independent Sufi.
Khan (among the former nomads). "Prince", or simply "sir".
Khanaqa. Meeting place of the Sufi adepts.
Khalifa. "Deputy", assistant to the master in a Sufi brotherhood.
Khoja. "Master".
Khütbe, Khotba. Sermon delivered during the Friday prayer in a mosque (Turkish, Persian).
Maqamat. Mystical station on the journey of the Sufi adept toward God.
Marabou. French for sheikh in Northern Africa.
Masjid. Small mosque.
Mazar. Tomb of a saint.
Medresseh (*madrasa*). Muslim high school.
Mektep. Muslim primary school.
Mihrab. Direction of Mecca, indicated in the mosque by a small recess.
Millet. "Nation".
Mudarris. Professor in a *medresseh*.
Muezzin. Caller to prayer.
Mufti. Canon lawyer.
Mujahid. Combatant in a holy war.
Mullah. Title of respect, given to members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, synonym of "cleric".
Murid. Disciple.
Murshid. Master, head of a brotherhood.
Naib. "Deputy", delegate of the *murshid*.
Namaz. Prayer.
Obkom. Communist Party Committee of the region (*oblast'*).
Oblast'. Region.
Pir. "Old man" (Persian), "master", synonym of sheikh; in Azerbaijan also the mausoleum of a Sufi saint.
Priguny "Jumpers", name given by the Russians to the Qadiris in the Caucasus.
Qadi. Quranic judge.
Qadymist. "Conservative".
Raykom. Communist Party Committee in a district (*rayon*).

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Rayon. District.
Razmezhevanie. Division of the formerly undivided Turkestan into several nation-states (1924-5).
Revkom. Military-Revolutionary Committee.
Sadaqa. Voluntary contribution of the believers to the upkeep of the mosque.
Salat (Arabic). "Prayer" (*Namaz* in Persian).
Sawn (Arabic). Fasting during the month of Ramadhan (*Uraza* in Turkish).
Selsovet. Village council.
Shahid. "Witness", also martyr for the Faith killed during the holy war.
Shakird. Student in a *medresseh*.
Shaman. Witch doctor among former nomads, superficially islamised.
Shari'yat. Quranic law.
Sheikh. Master (Arabic "old man"), head of a Sufi brotherhood.
Sheptuny. "Whisperers", Russian term for the Naqshbandis.
Suluk. Journey of the mystic towards God.
Sunna. "Tradition".
Taip, Taife. "Clan".
Taqiya. Legal right to dissimulation which permits a Shi'a to deny his religious affiliation when threatened.
Tariqat. "Path" (leading to God), Sufi brotherhood.
Tkhamada. In the North Caucasus, delegate of a Sufi sheikh.
Turkhi. Deputy of the Tkhamada.
Ulema (*Olama*). Muslim scholar (singular *Alim*).
Ulus. Turkic for "nation".
Umma. The community of believers.
Uraza. Fasting during the month of Ramadhan, synonym of *Sawn*.
Ustav. "Master", synonym of sheikh.
Ustad. Regulations (Russian).
Usul ud-Din. The (five) bases of Faith.
Waqf (*Vakuf*). Religious endowment intended to support a pious or philanthropic establishment.
Wird. Subdivision of the Qadiriya in the North Caucasus.
Zakat. Legal alms to assist the poor.
Zikr. "Remembrance" (of God), collective prayer, silent among the Naqshbandis, loud among the Qadiris.
Zikrists, Zikrism. Russian expression for the Qadiris in the North Caucasus.
Ziyarat. Mausoleum of a saint, synonym of *mazar, pir, gumbez*.

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